HISTORICAL MEMOIR

ITALIAN TRAGEDY,

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME:

ILLUSTRATED WITH

SPECIMENS AND ANALYSES

OF THE

MOST CELEBRATED TRAGEDIES;

AND INTERSPERSED WITH

OCCASIONAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE ITALIAN THEATRES

AND

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

OF THE PRINCIPAL TRAGIC WRITERS

OF

ITALY.

BY A MEMBER OF THE ARCADIAN ACADEMY OF ROME.

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PREFACE.

EARLY enamoured of the literature of Italy, it was, during many years, my solace amidst the corrosive cares of life. An opportunity of visiting the classic shores of that enchanting clime occurring, I availed myself of it, and returned a more enthusiastic admirer, if possible, of the effusions of the Italian muse. Soon after my arrival in my native country, ill-health obliged me to retire from "the busy hum of men," and I fled into rural seclusion in a verdant valley, watered by a winding river, at the foot of a range of lofty mountains. Here I summoned around me the swans of the Po and the Arno, and, while I listened to their mellifluous strains, time passed me with an inaudible step. But though I no longer sighed after the society which I had abandoned, I felt an ardent desire to increase its stock of harmless pleasures. With this view the present work was undertaken. Discovering in Italian tragedy, a rich mine of intellectual wealth, hitherto almost totally unexplored by my countrymen, I determined, however ill-qualified I might be, to endeavour to direct their notice to this literary treasure. If they should not find me an intelligent guide, they will, I trust, have no reason to accuse me of intentionally leading them astray. In taste and judgment I may often fail; but in truth of representation I flatter myself I shall be generally found scrupulously correct. Fortunate in my researches, my collection of Italian tragedies is not inconsiderable; and,

and, following the advice of Prior, I invariably made it a point to read before I wrote. I do not, however, pretend to have read, or to be in possession of all the dramas which I enumerate (though there are, indeed, few of them which I do not possess, and have not inspected); but as I was in no haste to appear before the tribunal of the public, I not only carefully consulted, but freely laid under contribution, all the beſt bibliothecal authorities and moſt impartial dramatic critics, within my reach. This occaſioned ſuch a copious flow of matter, that had I not firmly reſolved to adhere to my original idea of giving only a slight memoir, I should, perhaps, have deemed it necessary to apologise for the bulk of my volume.

The firſt plan of this work was circumſcribed within the humble limits of a *Catalogue raiſonné*. But a little reflection taught me to believe, that the dry, insipid nature of a catalogue would rather deter, than invite readers. This induced me to extend my purposed bounds, and, by the introduction of biographical notices of dramatic writers, to give a flexibility to my outline, which would enable me to embrace such objects of taste and curiosity as might occur in my progress through the extenſive fields of Italian literature. Indeed, the title which my work now assumes, seems to warrant this departure from my original plan. "Quand on écrit des mémoires," says the Abbè de Sade, "on a les coudées plus franches; on peut faire de petites excursions, appuyer sur quelques détails, saisir certains objets qui paroissent étrangers, et qui n'entreroient pas dans une histoire faite avec soin."

My firſt object was certainly the Italian reader; but I trust that the mere English reader will find I have not been totally regardless of his amuſement or information. Had I been more prodigal of translation, his disappointment would, perhaps, have been less frequent; but I am not certain that his pleasure would have been proportionably increaſed, as all the ſpecimens moſt neceſſary for illuſtration, or richeſt in poetic beauties, are tranſlated, and, though Italian quotations fre-

quently

quently occur in the text, the chain of the English narrative is seldom broken.

Despising an ostentatious display of reading, I have preserved my margin as free as possible, from the cumbrous pomp of reference. In tracing the rise and progress of any art, attention to dates is, however, indispensably necessary: I shall not therefore, I hope, be thought too anxiously exact in regard to titles and colophons.

Had not the state of the political world impeded the epistolary intercourse with the continent, I should probably have had many obligations to acknowledge to my Italian friends. Their aid, nevertheless, has not been wanting. Amongst those to whom I feel myself peculiarly indebted, I name with pride and gratitude, Signor Pietro Napoli-Signorelli of Naples, the Abate Melchior Cesarotti of Padua, and Prince Giacomo Giustiniani, late governor of Perugia.

For valuable accessions to my hoard of Italian dramas, and exertions to promote my undertaking, I am infinitely obliged to my friend Robert W. Wade, Esq. of Knightsbridge; M. R. I. A. to John Pinkerton, Esq. the profound historian of Scotland; and to Major William Ouseley, whose success in oriental pursuits has already raised him to literary eminence.

Indulged with the unrestricted use of a spirited translation of the Abate Monti's tragedies, by the admirable translator of the Inferno of Dante, I have enriched my memoir with copious extracts from that as yet, inedited work. And when the reader shall have perused the translation, by the same hand, of the choruses from the Aeripanda and Alcina, and of a few passages from other Italian dramas interspersed through these pages, he will, I am sure, regret that my poetical obligations to my inestimable friend, the Rev. Mr. Boyd, are not more abundant.

"When a man writes," says a French author, "he ought to animate himself with the thoughts of pleasing all the world; but he is

to

to renounce that hope, the very moment the book goes out of his hands." I never cherished the hopes, but I certainly suffer all the apprehensions of the French author. My motive for undertaking this work, I have already declared, fame was not my object: in my rural seclusion, in an island

her sweet voice could not sooth me. I do not say this to deprecate criticism; it is rather my wish to invite it: for should this Memoir ever reach another edition, my ambition would be, to render it less unworthy the public eye.

JOSEPH COOPER WALKER

St. Valeri,
August 6, 1798.

HISTORICAL MEMOIR
ON
ITALIAN TRAGEDY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE elegant arts lay buried under the ruins of the majestic INTROD.
fabric of the Roman empire until the beginning of the twelfth
century. Soothed by the voice of peace, and no longer dread-
ing the sword of the spoiler, then, and not sooner, did they
venture to raise their heads. Those faculties of the human
mind which have beauty and elegance for their objects, now
began to unfold themselves; and soon after they were brought
to action, they employed their powers upon the dramatic
art. So early as the year 1304, (1) Vasari describes an at-

INTROD. per un lungo poema epico."(e) Beauties, however, it has and amongst these Signorelli reckons a lively picture of the human passions. But in a period so partially enlightened a the fourteenth century, Mussato's powers in moving, or delineating the passions could not have been generally felt, or enjoyed; for the language in which his tragedies are written veiled all their beauties from the vulgar eye.(f) Still, therefore, mysteries or moralities, performed either by the clergy or under their direction, were the only dramatic amusement with which the people were indulged; and these rude exhibitions were generally represented in dumb show, with figures of wood, wax, or hœmatites, like the conversion of Saint Paul by Girolamo Genga;(g) or by men dressed grotesquely characteristic. Struck with the absurdity of this practice Lorenzo de' Medici secretly meditated a reform in the Italian

(e) Tiraboschi having observed, that the tragedies of Mussato are written on the model of Seneca, significantly adds, "ma un cattivo originale non potea fare che una più catti copia."

(f) It is observed by the abbè de Sade, that the reason which determined Dante and Petrarca "à composer en langue vulgaire," was the disuse of Latin in conversation "n'étoit plus," says he, "entendue que des sçavans, et ils vouloient être entendus de tout le monde." *tom.* i. *p.* 74.

(g) Vasari relates, that while Genga resided in Valli, a village near Urbino, "per non "star in ozio, fece di matita una conversione di S. Paolo con figure, e cavalli assai ben gra "di, e con bellissime attitudini." *tom.* v. *p.* 223. Il Cecca, a famous Florentine engineer, who died in 1499, excelled in designing such representations. Nor has the practice yet totally ceased in Italy: several instances met my own observation. The PRESEPE, which is still exhibited at Naples, may be denominated a mute mystery. It is a representation of the birth of our Saviour with all the concomitant circumstances.

drama

drama, while he sanctioned, from policy, the representations which he despised.(b) A favourable opportunity of carrying his plan into execution occurring, he availed himself of it. On the marriage (1486) of his daughter Maddalena to Francesco Cibo, nephew of Innocent VIII. instead of the exhibitions usual, in those times, upon such occasions, he had a rappresentazione or sacred drama, written by himself, entitled San Giovanni e San Paolo, performed by his own children, in his house at Florence. The heroes of this piece are two eunuchs, attendant on the daughter of Constantine the great, who are put to death by Julian the apostate, for their adherence to the christian religion. This little drama, calculated as well to edify as to amuse, is sprinkled with moral and political precepts. But Lorenzo did not stop here. He waged war with the saints, angels and devils, who had long infested the Italian stage. " Amongst the poems published at the close of the present work," says his elegant biographer, " will be found an attempt to substitute the deities of Greece and Rome, for the saints and martyrs of the christian church;(i) but the jealous

(b) Parallel to the public spectacle exhibited in the church of Spirito Santo in Florence, during the visit of Galeazzo Sforza, duke of Milan, in 1471. See *Hist. Fior.* p. 276. ed. 1550.

(i) See *Simia di Nanni, e Nori*, an unfinished piece, partaking of the nature of a masque, subjoined to the second volume of Mr Roscoe's *Life of Lorenzo de Medici*. The principal object of Lorenzo in this little piece, seems to be the correction of a crime still too prevalent in Italy—infidelity to the marriage-bed. Apollo, on detecting Mars and Venus in amorous dalliance, exclaims,

Ingioria

NIROD. jealous temper of the national religion seems, for a time, t
have restrained the progress, which might otherwise have bee
expected in this department of letters." Some years afte
the death of Lorenzo, continues our author, " a more decide
effort was made by Bernardo Accolti, in his drama of Virgi
nia, founded on one of the novels of Boccaccio."(*k*) Pre

fixe

Ingiuria è grande al letto romper fede;
Non sa chi pecchi, e di chi 'l sappia miri?
Che 'l sol, le stelle, el ciel, la luna il vede.

But the amiable author defeats, in a great degree, his own [illegible] in which
[illegible] his heroine prepare for the reception of her lover, and [illegible] with
which her invitation glows.

Marte, se ancor ti paron l'ore,
Vienne al mio dolce sospiro, ch' io t' aspetto;
Vulcano non è ben di tanto amore.
Vien, ch' io t' amo . . . . . .
Non indugiar, ch' el tempo passa, e vola.
Coperto m' ho di fin vermiglio il petto.

(*k*) Accolti is honourably noticed by Ariosto, *Fur. can.* xlvi. 10. and by C[illegible]
Cortig. Venet. 1553. The drama to which Mr. Roscoe attributes so happy an
was first represented in Siena, at the marriage of Antonio Spannocchi. The title of
piece is a singular monument of paternal affection;—Virginia was the name of a belov
daughter of the author! Both Riccoboni and Baretti have erroneously registered, in t
respective catalogues, the edition of this drama, printed in *Venice*, 1553, as the first. *Inv.*
theat. Ital. vol. i. p. 185. *Ital. lib.* p. 115. It was first printed in Florence, 1518, w
the capitoli e tramezzi of the author, subjoined. As this edition is very rare, I shall g
the full title: *Comincia la festevolissima nuova di Messer Bernardo Accolti detto: nella quale si tratta*
la nuova et bella nuova del nuovo Antonio Spannocchi: nella quale si tratta la morte di Virginia.
the end we read: *Finisce la nuova di Virginia: et capitoli: et strambotti di messer Bernardo Accolti detto*
l'Unico Aretino. Stampata in Firenze nel MD XVIII. Riccoboni falls into another error in regard to t

Virg

ixed to the first edition of this drama, the argument is given *INTRO*
n the following

SONETTO.

Virginia amando, el re guarisce, e chiede
Di Salerno el gran principe in marito,
Qual costretto a sposarla, e poi partito
Per mai tornar fin lei viva si vede.
Cerche Virginia scrivendo mand[illegible]de.
Ma el principe da molta gente assalito,
Li domanda, sa lei vuol sia reddito,
Dua condition, qual unpo sio il crede.
Però Virginia sola, e travestita,
Partendo ogni impedimento, ogni cognitione
Adempie al fin con prudentia infinita.
Onde el principe pien d'ammiratione
Lei di favore, e grazia rivestita
Sposa di nuovo con molta affettione.

ama: he says it is a [illegible]. Had he inspected the work, he would have found that it is in tava rima. The stanza with which the second act is opened, shall serve as a specimen.

Dura profana abhorrita fortuna:
mai contenta star ferma in uno stato
tu sempre giri con rota importuna
el basso elevi, et l'alto hai ruinato.
Et l'huom che justo senza causa alchuna
persegui: & quel che è justo fai beato
se morte o prego in te pietate arreca
però chiamata sei fallace et cieca.

However

NTROD. However imperfect this piece may be, it probably assiste
in promoting a revolution in the state of the Italian dram
which led to its melioration.

HISTORICAL MEMOIR
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SECTION I.

MD. ——— MDC.

... perhaps, be thought, from the nature of my under- *SECT. I.*
taking, that I should have commenced with the Sofonisba of Galeotto del Carretto, Marquis of Savona, which was presented, by the author, to Isabella d' Este Gonzaga, Marchioness of Mantua, in the year 1502, and which Signor Signorelli says, "fu la prima tragedia scritta nel nostro volgare idioma." But though it should be admitted, that the Sofo-

SECT. I. nisba of Galeotto was the first tragedy written in the Italian language, it ought to be observed, that it probably owed its birth to the success of Mussato in the same department of literature, or to the author's knowledge of the meditated innovation of Lorenzo de' Medici; and it is the business of history, however humbly employed, to push her enquiries to the fountain head.

But though Signor Signorelli opens his account of the rise and progress of Italian tragedy with this drama, he seems to hesitate, afterwards, in regard to its right to the honorable distinction which he bestows upon it. "E verseggiata," says he, "in ottava rima ed ha qualche debolezza e varj difetti, ma non è però indegna di esser chiamata tragedia." Angelo Ingegneri(*a*) speaks less favourably of this drama. The scene, he observes, is shifted from Carthage to Rome, and from Rome to Egypt, with a magic celerity; and the fable, he adds, is divided into fifteen or twenty acts, with "una rarità d' esempio maravigliosa." But the author of the Parnaso Espanolo would expunge this piece from the list of Italian tragedies, contemptuously denominating it, a species of allegorical dialogue. Without attempting to reconcile those jarring opinions, or to determine the class of dramas to which this piece properly belongs, I shall proceed to observe, on the authority of Signor Signorelli, that a few years after it was pre-

(*a*) *Disc. pors. rappresent.* p. 43.

sented

sented to Isabella, it was printed in Venice, (*b*) with the first Palazzo e Tempio d' Amore, (*c*) a comedy, by the same author.

Though Galeotto del Carretto has little claim to our admiration or regard, as a tragic poet, he shares our esteem and respect; and we follow him with pleasure to his castle of Finaro, at the foot of the Appenines, in the fertile plains of Piedmont. After sheltering himself, for some time, from the storms of faction, in the court of Guglielmo, Marquis of Monferrato, he retired to this castle to indulge in "letter'd ease." And here he died in 1530. Besides the works already mentioned, Galeotto wrote two comedies, entitled, Le Nozze di Psiche e di Cupidine, and I sei contenti: he also published occasional Rime.

The Sofonisba of Galeotto was succeeded, in the year 1508,(*d*) by la Pamphila of Antonio da Pistoia, a tragedy founded

(*b*) *Ven. per ... de iii. p.* 1524. It is to be regretted that Signor Signorelli does not mention the particular edition to which he alludes. The earliest that has met my observation, is that of *Giolito*, 1546. If this drama was, at any time, published with the Tempio d'Amore, it must have been subsequent to the year 1524, as the first edition of that comedy appeared at Venice in that year, (*per Nicolò Zoppino*), without the Sofonisba.

(*c*) This comedy is written in various measures, and crowded with forty two interlocutors! The frontispiece to the first edition (*Ven.* 1524), is a wood-cut print of a concert, consisting of eight performers, each of whom plays on a different instrument.

(*d*) *Ven. per Manfredo Bono de Monferrato.* Another edition was published in *Ven. per Nicolino Sessa*, 1516. And Crescimbeni notices a third in *Ven. per Zorzi di Rusconi*, 1518. The two first lie before me; but I have never seen the third. The Pamphila is not noticed either by Fontanini, Riccoboni, or Baretti; and, though Crescimbeni mentions the title, he

SECT. I. founded upon the story of Gismonda and Guiscardo. In thi rude drama, the fable and all the incidents of Boccaccio' novel(*e*) are closely followed; but the scene is shifted from Salerno to Thebes, and Greek names are given to the dramati personæ. The author, who seems to have had some regard to the Greek model,(*f*) neither strictly observes, nor grossly violates the unities. And, at the end of each act, a choru appears; but as it neither takes a part in the dialogue, no always consists of the same persons, we may conclude it wa not stationary. In the first chorus, beginning

Ogni cosa vince amore,

the god of love is introduced, boasting of the wonderful effect of his potent art; four syrens form the second; the three fates take a part in the third; and the fourth is led by Atropos In the choruses the measure is not uniform; but the argument and all the dialogue of the drama, are clothed in terza rima The following scene from the fifth act, will afford the reade an idea of the author's style and manner.

seems to have been ignorant of the subject; for he asserts, that Girolamo Razzi was the firs " a trattarlo tragicamente," in his Gismonda, which did not appear till 1569.

(*e*) *Decam.* Giorn. iv. *Nov.* 1. Due praise is bestowed on this affecting story in *Novelle d M. Leonardo d' Arezzo*, subjoined to *Novelle, et di bel parlar gentile*, (*Fior. nella stamperia de Giunti*, 1572); and another tale, drawn from Grecian history, related " per l' opposito," say the author.

(*f*) Perhaps I should have said the Roman model, as the Pamphila is divided into acts; a practice which did not prevail on the Greek stage, and of which the Romans are said to be the inventors.

DEMETRIO

DEMETRIO RE: LITIGIA: PAMPHILA.

Io non ho bene inteso ogni parola. De.
Reddi de nuove: che non corra fallo
A che partito fe la mia figliola.

LITIGIA.

Ella fe darsi un vaso de christallo,
Penso che vi era dentro solimato
Che non e men mortal chel risagallo.
Da lei fu in una coppa dor votato,
Poi missessello a bocca, e in abandono
La beve, qual fa lacqua un amalato.

DEMETRIO.

Tardo ahy me aduedato mi sono
De la mia crudelta: fussio degiuno
Dhaver mandato il cruciato dono.
Non mi bastava haver de questi luno
Posto in captivita: per fin che lira
Fusse placata: e lanimo importuno.
Ma quel che nel principio ben non mira
A quel che advenir po: sel fine e poi
Cativo: indarno ne piange: e sospira.
Pamphila ha pur compito i giorni soi
Si come me ne stato referito:
Tardi te accorgi re de gli error toi.

Che

SECT. I.

Che se ben Philostrato haveа fallito
Potevi risalvando el suo errore
Con vera scusa a lei farlo marito.
Satisfacendo in tanto al tuo honore:
De non haverla mai tomaritata.
Farlo gran duca, principe, e signore.
Ma la mia figlia come inamorata
Involata ne le forze de cupido:
Veduta lira mia se disperata.
Che viva anchor sia poco me fido:
Ahyme che io la veggio chel cor piglia
Vedova stanza abandonato nido,
O mia sopra ogni altra amata figlia,
Qual pena dime cosi te importuna:
Far pur bon core, e meco ti consiglia.

PAMPHILA.

O padre a più desiata fortuna.
Le tue lachryme serba; el tuo lamento,
Perche per me non ne desidero una
Tu mostri di dolerti, e sei contento
Del caso occorso: e sei tu causa stato
Chio sia conducta a lultimo mio accento:
Ma se di quello amor, che mhai portato
Ti resta anchor, sciptilla, babbi piacere
Chel mio corpo a lamante sia locato:

Po

Poi che lassati tu non ci hai godere
L'amore in vita: dovunque ci se sia
Beato sia sempr ci mio corpo a giacere
Pel fren c giunto de la morte mia
E tra miseri e mortali ombranti:
A dio padre e sol. l'alma va via.
Valete dunque e voi giovani amanti.

This drama, according to Quadrio, was represented on the wooden theatre, erected in the palace of Hercules II. duke of Ferrara, to whom it is dedicated. Of the author, so little is known, that Sig. Signorelli cannot determine whether he was of the family of Camelli, or of that of Vinci.

But this was only the dawn of the tragic art in modern Italy. Let us now turn our eyes to behold the splendour of day. "La Sophonisbe du célèbre prélat Trissino, nonce du pape," says Voltaire, "est la premiere tragédie réguliére que l'Europe ait vûe, après tant des siécles de barbarie." And Giraldi also, at the conclusion of his Orbecche, says,

E'l Trissino gentil, che col suo canto
Prima d'ogn'un dal Tebro, e dall' Illisso
Gia trasse la Tragedia ah' onde d' Arno.
Gentle Trissino too, whose potent strain,
From wand'ring Tiber and Illysus, drew
To Arno's hallow'd shade, the tragic muse
Melpomene, to weep.

Nor

SECT. I. Nor does this memorable event in the history of the modern drama, remain unsung by the English muse. Pope celebrates it in the prologue to Thomson's Sophonisba:

> When learning, after the long gothic night,
> Fair, o'er the western world, renew'd its light,
> With arts arising, Sophonisba rose,
> The tragic muse returning, wept her woes.
> With her th' Italian scene first learn'd to glow;
> And the first tears for her were taught to flow.

This tragedy was represented in Rome, 1515, with great magnificence, in the presence of Leo X. to whom it was dedicated, and under whose auspices it was written. And, in the year 1562, when a wooden model of the famous olympic theatre of Palladio was erected, for trial, in the palazzo della ragione, or town-hall of Vicenza, the Sofonisba of Trissino was selected for representation. The historians of Vicenza dwell, with pride and pleasure, on the splendour of this spectacle, and on the great concourse of nobility, from even the most distant parts of Lombardy, who assisted.(g) This tra-

(g) Either apprehensive of exhausting their funds, or despairing of equalling, in any future exhibition, the splendour of this spectacle, the members of the Olympic academy immediately after the performance, resolved, that their dramatic representations should totally cease, or be, for awhile, suspended. But it appears from a volume of inedited minutes of this academy, in the possession of Pierfillippo Castelli, that at a meeting held on the 10th of August, 1570, it was determined to revive the dramatic exercises of the academy, and to begin with "una favola pastorale," which "sia recitata publicamente con quella minor spesa che sia possibile."

-gedy

gedy is written in verso sciolto, and the author, following the Greek model, conducts his plot with great simplicity, only interrupting the course of the action with the odes, and occasional observations of a moralizing chorus. Amongst the many passages justly entitled to admiration in this drama, the scene between Sophonisba and Erminia, after the former drains the fatal bowl, stands pre-eminent "Un cuore non indurito "da' pregiudizj, verserà pietose lagrime," says an Italian critic, "al racconto del veleno preso dalla regina, a' di lei discorsi, "alla compassionevole contesa con Erminia, ed al quadro delle "donne affolate intorno a Sofonisba che trapassa, di Erminia "che la sostiene e del figliuolino che bacia la madre la quale "inutilmente si sforza per vederlo l'ultima volta sul punto di "spirare."(b) But the reader shall have an opportunity of de-

(b) *Stor. de' teat. tom.* iii. *p.* 106. Jacopo Castellini, a contemporary of Trissino, has also made Carthage the scene of a tragedy. But his Asdrubale is infinitely inferior to the Sofonisba, in every point of view. It is a feeble prolocuto,—a production in which we rarely discover a scintillation of genius. In order to produce his catastrophe, the author employs the agency of fire. The wife of Asdrubale,

Con quel pensier che vende al fisco
Sofonisba figliuola non, ed moglie,
Di non volere esser menata a Roma
Prigioniera dietr' al trionfo,

precipitates herself and her child into the flames, which are preying on the city of Carthage, and both are supposed to be consumed in the presence of the audience. This tragedy, which was printed in *Firenze*, 1585, *per* [illegible] *L. Torrentino*, is dedicated to Francesco de' Medici, and embellished with a view of the city of Carthage.

SECT. I. ciding on the merits of this admired passage for himself; o passage to which it would be equally vain and presumptuous to attempt to do justice in a translation.

Sof. A che piangete? non sapete ancora
Che ciò, che nasce, a morte si destina?
Cor. Ahimè! che questa è pur troppo per tempo;
Ch' ancor non siete nel vigesim' anno.
Sof. Il bene esser non può troppo per tempo.
Erm. Che duro bene è quel, che ci distrugge!
Sof. Accostatevi a me; voglio appoggiarmi;
Ch' io mi sento mancare, e già la notte
Tenebrosa ne vien negli occhi mici.
Erm. Appoggiatevi pur sopra' l mio petto.
Sof. O figlio mio, tu non avrai più madre;
Ella già se ne va, statti con Dio.
Erm. Oimè! che cosa dolorosa ascolto!
Non ci lasciate ancor, non ci lasciate.
Sof. I'non posso far altro; e'sono in via.
Erm. Alzate il viso a questo, che vi bacia.
Cor. Riguardatelo un poco. *Sof.* Ajmè! non posso.
Cor. Dio vi raccolga in pace. *Sof.* Io vado . . . . addio.

The reader whose tears would not be "taught to flow" o perusing this passage, must, indeed, have an heart "indurit da' pregiudizj." As a further specimen of this celebrated tra gedy, I shall transcribe a beautiful ode to love, in the thir

act

act,(*) and subjoin the free and spirited translation of a friend. *ACT I.*

Amor, che ne i leggiadri ahi pensieri
Sovente alberghi, e reggi quella parte;
Da cui non ti diparte
Rugosa fronte, e pel canuto, e bianco;
Poi sì dolci lacciuoi, con sì bell' arte
Poni d' intorno a quei, che son più fieri,
Che porgon volentieri
A le feroci tue saette il fianco;
Ogni valore al tuo contrasto è manco.
Nè solamente a gli uomini mortali
Ti fai sentir, ma su nel ciel trappassi,
E l' arroganza abbassi
De' maggior dei con li dorati strali;
E piante, et animali,
E ciò che vive, cede a la tua forza;
Che ne la resistenzia si rinforza.
La tua più vaga, e più soave stanza
È ne' begli occhi de le donne belle;
Ivi le tue facelle
Accendi, e d' indi la tua fiamma è sorta.
E come i naviganti per le stelle,

(*) I follow the division of the Marquis Maffei, who, in his Teatro Italiano, gives the "modo di recitare" this tragedy which was followed in Verona. In the original drama there are no divisions, either of acts or scenes.

Che son d' intorno al polo, hanno baldanza,
Che là, ov' è lor speranza,
Potranno andar con quella altera scorta;
Così la gente presa si conforta,
E spera ogni suo ben da que' bei lumi,
Che l'enfiammaro; ond' or ne trae diletto,
Or lacrime, or sospetto,
Secondo il variar d' altrui costumi.
Ben par, che si consumi,
Se poi gli è tolto quel, che la distrugge;
Onde' l mal segue, e' l ben paventa, e fugge.

ODE TO LOVE.

When in the generous breast you hide,
And o'er the mounting thought preside,
Imperious Love! not stealing time
Can lure you from the throne sublime;
Nor furrow'd cheeks, nor locks of snow,
Can force you to forego
Your deathless hold. The heavenly snare
With such consummate care
'Round your obedient slaves you lay,
Who, to your welcome sway,
Fondly extend their suppliant arms,
And melt to soft alarms;
Baring their bosoms to the blow,
They court thy bended bow.

Heroes in vain thy prowess dare
All that rove this vale of anguish,
Learn to love and learn to languish;
And, even the immortal gods the soft contagion share,
The tenants of the grove,
Nay, woods and wilds themselves submit to love.
All that live thy laws obey,
And rebels but extend thy far-subduing sway.
But, in that resistless glance
Shedding soft delicious trance
Thro' the soul, in amorous pain,
Cupid! most thou lov'st to reign.
Hence thou stealst thy heavenly fire
Which the slaves of young desire.
Follow, like the leading star,
Which the seaman hails afar
Near the pole, with ceaseless round.
Circling thro' the blue profound:
Hope illumes their weary way,
Hope, the distant prize to gain,
Hovering, with unfolded ray.
Where thou leadst the amorous train.
From those eyes, the founts of pleasure,
Bliss unfading without measure,
Joys, from earthly dregs refin'd,
Still the lover hopes to find:
Now, varying to the glance of scorn,
They swell the heart with woes.

Now

ECT. " nisbe du Trissino, introduisit la règle des trois unités." (m
I. This tragedy was first published in Rome, in the year 1524 (n

But we must not dismiss the father of Italian tragedy wit
the bare mention of his name: he has a just claim to our par
ticular notice.

Giovan Giorgio Trissino, descended from a long line of il
lustrious ancestors, was born in Vicenza, in the year 147
His father, a colonel in the service of the republic of Venic
dying (o) before his son had reached his ninth year, the car
of his education devolved on his mother, a Veronese of th
family of Bevilacqua. This lady, remarkable for her virtue
and accomplishments, did not fail in the attention due to s
important a charge. After an elementary course, conducte
by Francesco di Gragnuola, she sent our author, at a tende
age, to Milan, for the purpose of studying Greek, under De
metrio Calcondila, a learned Athenian, of whom he make
honourable mention in his Italia Liberata, and to whose me
mory he erected a monument in the church of the Passion i

(m) *Dis. sur la trag. ancienne et moderne*, prefixed to *Semiramis*. See also *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*. *Lond.* 1782, *vol.* ii. *p.* 348. "Il est remarquable," says Voltaire, "qu'en Italie et en France, la véritable tragédie dût sa naissance à une Sophonisbe. *Sa Médée*.

(n) At the end of this edition we read, *Stampata in Roma per Ludovico scrittore, et Lautiti Perugino intagliatore, nel* MDXXIIII. *del mese di Luglio con prohibitione, che nessuno possa stampar quest' opera per anni diece, come appare nel Brieve concesso al prefato Ludovico dal Santissimo Nostr Signore Papa, Clemente* VII. *per tutte le opere nuove che 'l stampa.* (8vo.)

(o) His death is attributed to grief, occasioned by the defeat of a detachment which h commanded, in an engagement with the Germans.

Milan

Milan.(*p*) Under a master with whom he was so much pleas- *S.C.*
ed, and whom he so highly respected, it may be presumed he *l.*
made a great proficiency in his studies. To the study of Greek
literature, he united that of the mathematics, natural philo-
sophy, and architecture. To his deep acquaintance with
natural philosophy, Rucellai bears testimony in his Api; and
of his theoretical and practical skill in architecture, his Trat-
ato di Architettura, and his house at Cricoli, are existing
monuments. Having completed his education, he stepped
forward into life. In 1504 he married Giovanna Tiene, a no-
ble Venetian, by whom he had two sons, Francesco and Giu-
lio. Francesco died young, but Giulio lived to rise to the
dignity of archpriest of Vicenza, and to embitter his father's
days. Our author's conjugal felicity was short: He had been
only a few years married when Giovanna died. Deeply af-

(*p*) The inscription with which Trissino honoured the memory of his preceptor, should not be forgotten.

P. M.
DEMETRIO CHALCONDYLÆ ATHENIENSI
IN STUDIIS LITERARUM GRÆCARUM
EMINENTISSIMO;
QUI VIXIT ANNOS LXXVII. MENS. V.
ET OBIIT ANNO CHRISTI, MDXI.
JOANNES GEORGIUS TRISSINUS GASP. FILIUS
PRÆCEPTORI OPTIMO ET SANCTISSIMO
POSUIT.

Of this learned Athenian, who had also been, for awile, the preceptor of Lorenzo de' Medici, some account may be found in Mr. Roscoe's life of that bright ornament of Italian literature. *Vol. ii. chap. 7.*

 flicted

SECT. I. flicted at this event, he went to Rome, where he undertook his Sofonisba, in the hope of dissipating his grief by giving a new turn to his thoughts. While he resided in this city Julius II. died, and Leo X. rose to the Papal chair. To this munificent patron of polite literature and the elegant arts Trissino could not long remain unknown. He was invited to his court, and honored with several marks of distinction. But the passion of ambition yielding to the love of letters, he solicited and obtained Leo's permission to retire (1514) to his villa of Cricoli. Here he flattered himself he should indulge in the uninterrupted enjoyment of his favourite pursuits;—but how vain are the hopes of man! instead of the tranquillity after which he sighed, he found his property in danger and himself involved in a vexatious law-suit. Before he could extricate himself from this embarrassment, he was re-called to the court of Rome; and soon after sent as nuncio to the emperor Maximilian. Of the result of this embassy he communicated an account to Leo, through his friend and confidant Giovanni Rucellai. Rucellai, in a letter from Viterbo, reports to his friend the satisfaction which the pope expressed at his conduct, and the observation which he made on reading his letter: "egli ha," said his holiness, "fino a quì proceduto bene, e non poteva meglio exequire la mia volontà di quello ha facto." Nor was Maximilian less pleased with the conduct of Trissino. When he had finished his embassy, and was preparing, by Leo's directions, to return by Dalia, the em-

pero

peror begged he might hasten home by the shortest route, and consult with his master on a treaty which he was desirous of setting on foot between the king of England, the king of Spain, the pope, and himself, against the French. The emperor's letter to the pope on this occasion, does much honor to Trissino. Soon after his return, our author was dispatched to Venice to assist in promoting a crusade against the Sultan Selim II. a wild project which Leo had much at heart, and which would probably have been carried into execution had the life of Maximilian been prolonged but a few years. During his stay at Venice he employed his interest with the senate to obtain a confirmation of his right to that part of his property which was in dispute. So far as their jurisdiction extended, he succeeded; but he was re-called to Rome before he could obtain a final decision. The flattering letter which he received on this occasion has been preserved by Bembo, and does equal honor to Leo and Trissino. The object for which he was recalled, was another embassy to Venice, to treat about the favourite project of a crusade; the conquests, the abilities, and the ambition of Selim having, at that time, as Dr. Robertson observes, spread over Europe a general and well founded alarm. Leo thus introduces him to the doge, Leonardo Lauredano. "Proficiscenti Venetias "Jo. Georgio Trissino Vicentino; quem quidem propter bona-"rum artium doctrinam, et politiores literas, excellentemque "virtutem unicè diligo; mandavi, ut tibi salutem nuntiaret

SECT. I. meis verbis, &c."—But during his public occupations and pri-
vate vexations, Trissino still found time to court the muses
Having finished his Sofonisba, he dedicated it to Leo, who
had it represented with great magnificence, in Rome. In
the dedication, which instructs while it flatters, Trissino
takes occasion to account, with elegance and ingenuity, for
his deviation from the common practice, in clothing his dra-
ma in the living language of his country, and for his occa-
sionally freeing himself from "the troublesome bondage of
rhyming;" at the same time, without arrogating to himself
the invention of blank verse, he recommeds the use of that
measure in all compositions which are intended to move the
passions. In 1521, died his friend and patron, Leo, who, it
is said, offered him a cardinal's cap(q) which he refused, as
he had resolved on forming another matrimonial engagement
Returned from Rome to Vicenza, he resumed his poetical stu-
dies, and addressing a canzone to Isabella, Marchioness of
Mantua,(r) she invited him (1522) to undertake the education
of her son Hercules, which he declined. In the year 1523 he

(q) Tho' Trissino never accepted of any ecclesiastic dignity, Voltaire, with his wonted
historical inaccuracy, adds the tittle of "le prélat" to his name, whenever he happens to men-
tion it.

(r) This lady enjoyed the peculiar felicity of being addressed by two poets, who respec-
tively claim the honour of giving birth to Italian tragedy. But it is not only in the dedica-
tion of Calcotto, and the canzone of Trissino, that her mental and personal charms are en-
shrined; she is again celebrated by Trissino in his *Ritratti delle bellissime donne d'Italia*.
Isabella was daughter of Hercules I. duke of Ferrara, under whose auspices the drama first
raised its head in that city.

was

was sent, with other delegates, from Vicenza, to congratulate Andrea Gritti on his being exalted to the dignity of doge of Venice. His latin oration on this occasion is highly praised, and has been often printed. In the same year he addressed a letter of congratulation to Clement VII. on his promotion to the chair of Saint Peter: and, at the same time, sent him the canzone beginning

Signor, che fosti eternamente eletto
Nel consiglio divin per il governo
De la sua fianca e travaljata nave; &c.

Flattered with this instance of attention from Trissino, Clement, who had long known and esteemed him, invited him to Rome, where, in July 1524, he published his Sofonisba. And in the month of December following, the press imparted his Epistola de le Lettere nuovamente aggiunte nella lingua Italiana. In this little work he exhibits his scheme for amplifying the Italian alphabet with certain Greek letters, which, in his opinion, would assist in regulating the tones of the voice in the pronunciation of the Italian language.(s) This idea

(s) Soon after Trissino had published his plan for amplifying and improving the Italian alphabet, he received from Valerio Centranio, a physician of Vicenza, the following curious

SONETTO.

L'Ω grande da gli Greci nominato,
A differentia di quel, ch' è minore;
L'Η dest' ignudo; e di poco valore,
A lato ad Alph' al Giot' accompagnato;

Che-

ECT. I. idea he supports in his Dubbj Grammaticali, and carried int execution in the first edition of his Italia Liberata. Still con tinuing in the service of Clement, his studies were again in terrupted by diplomatic engagements, of which the mos honorable was that of assisting as ambassador from the cour of Rome, at the coronation of Charles V. at Bologna, in 1530 on which occasion the privilege of bearing the golden fleec in his arms was granted him. Weary of the bustle and in trigues of courts, he once more sighed after retirement, and with the permission of Clement, returned from Bologna t Vicenza, where the vexations of litigation again awaite

Che nel scriver Toscan ha ritrovato
Vostr' alt' ingegno; facendo maggiore
Numer di Lettre: ch' in vario tenore
Suonan a chi non [illegible] 'l cervel fiacato:
Vorrei saper: se nei Greca Scrittura
Leggendo, debben ritenere il suono,
Che nel legger Toscan Kiaro si sente.
Rispondete signor: che la censura,
Et gran judicio vostro, a me tal sono,
Qual nel ad giorno: a notte fusco ardente.
Anchor mi vien a mente
D' addimandar; se l' Ita Greco tiene
La voce: ch' a l' E Tosco si conviene.
Et forse dican bene
Quelli, che voljan per detti d' Homero
L' Ita suonar; come il Tosco E primiero.
Brama saper il vero.
Adunque forse l' O Toscan antico
Terrà 'l suon d' il Greco O: che minor dice:
Il servo di vostra magn.
Valerio Cantannio.

him

aim. Doubting the ability or honesty of his lawyers, he un- SAC
dertook his own cause, and pleaded with so much eloquence I.
hat he not only vanquished his adversaries, but covered them
with shame. But he was still to suffer from domestic disser-
ions. About this time he married Bianca Trissino, who,
rom her uncommon personal endowments was called the
Helen of her day. This lady, who appears to have been as
rtful as beautiful, soon attempted to estrange the affections
f her husband from his son Giulio, by Giovanna, his former
vife, in order to render her own son, Ciro, their sole object.
Succeeding too well, an irreconcileable quarrel took place be-
ween Giulio and his father. Soon after (1536) Bianca died.
lough raised to the dignity of one of the consiglio cantam-
irale, in reward for some important services which he had
endered his country, home became hateful to our author, and
e retired to a delicious retreat in the little island of Murano(z)
near

(z) This island, which is distant about half a mile from Venice, is divided into four parishes, and contains six thousand souls. A favourite retreat of the Venetians during the villeggiatura, it is, as may be supposed, thickly covered with houses and gardens. Besides some churches, several richly endowed monasteries, and two learned seminaries, it is embellished with two noble palaces, one of which is adorned with the glowing effusions of the pencil of Paolo Veronese; and the other, called Ca Grande, has a gallery, which, according to the author of the *Forestiera*, is "quasi un terzo miglio" in length. Though Murano did not appear to me well calculated for rural seclusion, I will not deny that the Venetians may find it a charming summer retreat; but I will confess I entertain some doubts of the purity of its air at all seasons, since it is, "officinis vitrariis celeberrima," celebrated for its glass manufactories. Some future biographer of Trissino will, I hope, direct the traveller's police to the house in which the Italia liberata received the last touches from the hand of the author.

SECT. I. near Venice. Here he completed the first nine books of his Italia Liberata, begun in 1525,(u) and, dedicating the work to Charles V. sent it to his Imperial Majesty by the hand of a friend. Flattered with the dedication, or pleased with the production, Charles insinuated a wish to see the poem continued. The venerable bard taking the hint, printed the remaining eighteen books in Venice in 1548, and sent a copy by his son Ciro to the bishop of Trent, to be presented to the Emperor, by whom it was graciously received. On the completion of this work, an effusion of joy, mingled with vanity, burst forth from Trissino in the following

SONETTO.

Io son pur giunto al desiato fine
Del faticoso e lungo mio poema,
Che fatto è tal, che non havrà mai tema
Di tempo, e guerre, o d'altre empie ruine.'

author. The anonymous author of the *Giudicio sopra la Canace e Macareo di S. Speroni*, speaks of a visit which he made Trissino in Murano; but he mentions no circumstance which would lead to a discovery of the house in which he found him.

(u) *Stampata in Roma per Valerio e Luigi Dorici, a petitione di Antonio Maria Vincentino* MDXLVII. *di Maggio. Con Privilegio di N. S. Papa Paul III. et di altri Potentati.* This edition is so extremely rare, that the last Italian biographer of Trissino declares he never saw more than two copies of it. "Rarissima è questa edizione, e due sole copie n' abbiamo noi vedute in Venezia, una nella celebre libreria Pisani, e l' altra nella preziosa libreria del fu Signor Apostolo Zeno." *La vita di Gio. Giorg. Trissino: Scritta da Pier. Castelli, ven. 1753. p. 91.* To my copy of this literary rarity, is subjoined the first edition of the remaining eighteen books of the poem, *Stampata in Venezia per Valomeo Janiculo da Bressa ne l' anno* MDXLVIII. *di Settembre. Con le gratie del summo Pontifice, e de la illustrissima Signoria di Venetia, e de l' illustrissimo duca di Fiorenza; che alcuno non la possa ristampare per anni x. sotto espressa licentia de l' autore.*

Anzi

Anzi dappoi che al natural confine
Giugnerà l'alma, e dopo l'hora estrema,
De la qual tanto ognun paventa, e trema,
Spero haver laudi allhor quasi divine:
E viver dopo morte in quella carte,
E salir quindi glorioso al cielo,
Lasciando a basso le terrene salme.
Poi senza più curar caldo, nè gelo,
Dicar ai templi di Ciprigna, e Marte,
Lō mie vittoriose, e chiare palme.

I see the bound! my weary task is o'er,
The muses' long protracted toil is past,
The pile is built that scorns the sweeping waste
Of time, of tempest, and Bellona's roar.
And when my soul has reach'd the solemn shore
Of mortal things, and meets the last extreme,
I hope to live an everlasting theme
Beyond the gloom of that tremendous hour:
O'er fate triumphant, by this lofty lay,
To heaven's harmonious climes I'll yet aspire,
And leave the cumbrance of the dust below:
Scorning the brumal blast, and fervid ray,
The martial god, and queen of soft desire,
Shall bid my palms around their altars grow.(v)

While

(v) What has happened to Trissino, has happened to many other writers: the production n which he reposed his fame has sunk into neglect, while his other works continue to be read nd applauded. Of this neglect Mr. Warton seems to assign the true cause: "Trissino,"

SECT. I. While he was thus employed in imparting to the public the fruits of his studies, his son Giulio, availing himself of his absence, involved him in new litigations. Enraged at this undutiful conduct, he made his will, and bequeathed the whole of his property to Ciro, and his body to the monks of Santa Maria degli Angeli, of Murano. Giulio, however, succeeded in wresting part of his property from him. His anger was now directed against the professors of the law, upon whom he poured a torrent of abuse in his comedy of I Simillimi, on which he was then employed. The passage to which I allude begins thus:

O maledette sian tutte le liti,
Tutti i garbugli, e tutti gli avvocati,
Nati a ruina de l' umane gente,
Che si nutriscon degli altri disconci, &c.

With a lacerated mind, a body enfeebled by infirmities and an heavy weight of years, the wretched old man hastened to Trent to throw himself again at the feet of Charles. From Trent he proceeded to Rome, carefully avoiding his native Vicenza; and soon after his arrival in that city, he yielded

says he, "who flourished a few years after Ariosto, had taste and boldness enough to publish an epic poem, written in professed imitation of the Iliad. But this attempt met with little regard or applause for those reasons on which its real merit was founded. It was rejected as a insipid and uninteresting performance, having few devils or enchantments to recommend it. *Ob. on the Fairy Queen*, vol. i. p. 3. *Lond.* 1762. In a dialogue between Trissino and Calliope in *Le Rivolte di Parnaso* (c. iii. s. i.) the latter makes some severe strictures on the Italian Liberata, which seems an echo of the public voice.

(1550

SECT. I.

1550) to the stroke of death. Where he was buried, is undetermined; but it is generally believed that he was interred in the church of Sant' Agata. In his house at Cricoli hangs his portrait by Zambellino; and his brother academicians, grateful to his memory, raised a statue to him in the olympic theatre. When Goldoni visited Vicenza, the family of our author were not extinct.(w) And two palaces belonging to the Conti Trissini, which rank amongst the happiest designs of Palladio and Scamozzi, still adorn the native city of the father of Italian tragedy.

Encouraged by the success of Trissino, his contemporary and friend Giovanni Rucellai, nephew of Lorenzo de' Medici, and cousin-german of Leo X.(x) entered the dramatic walk. In the year 1516, his Rosmunda(y) was recited in his garden at Florence, in the presence of Leo. This tragedy is founded

(w) See *Mem. del Goldoni* (*Ven.* 1788. *p.* 186.) an exquisitely entertaining work, and, as Gibbon observes, more truly dramatic than his comedies.

(x) Giovanni Rucellai was the son of Nannina, one of the sisters of Lorenzo de' Medici, by Bernardo Rucellai, a Florentine, "who has not only signalized himself," says Mr. Roscoe, "as a protector of learned men, but was himself one of the most accomplished scholars of his time." *vid.* ii. *p.* 152. The Trionfo della Calunnia in the Canti Carnascialeschi, is attributed to Bernardo Rucellai. But he is better known as the author of De Bello Italico, and De Bello Pisano. Some particulars of his life may be found in *Elog. degli uomini illust. toc. tom.* ii.; and in an edition of *Canti Carnascialeschi*, printed at *Cospoli* (*Pisa*) in 1750, his portait, rudely engraven, is given.

(y) The first edition of this tragedy bears this quaint title, *Rosmunda di misser Giovanni Rucellai patrizio fiorentino, e della recta di Adriano difensore fidelissimo.* At the end: *Impresso in Siena, per Michelangelo di Berto. F. ad instantia di Alexandro libraro. Adi* XXVII. *di Aprile, anno* MDXXV. *in* 8vo. Several editions of this favourite drama have appeared in Venice, and in Florence; but the most correct is that of *Pad. presso G. Comino*, 1723.

SECT. I. upon a story of strong interest in the history of the Lombards, which is related with simplicity and perspicuity, in the Isto-ria Fiorentina of Machiavelli, and splendidly embellished and minutely detailed in the luminous page of Gibbon. In this drama, Rucellai gave the first proof of his dramatic pow-ers. But he seems to have succeeded better in his Oreste, in which he is allowed to have supported the character of tha unfortunate prince with ability, and to have painted the pas-sions with vigour and with truth. It should, however, be ob-served, that in the Rosmunda, Rucellai appears an origina writer; but in the Oreste he only affects the humble characte of an imitator. He constructed, upon an historic basis, th fable of the former; but the fable of the latter is borrowe from the Iphigenia in Tauris of Eurripides. On the Rosmunda I shall here dilate a little, not only because (though ofte printed) it is of rare occurrence; but because it was the secon regular tragedy which appeared in the Italian language.

Though the fable of the Rosmunda is conducted with th utmost simplicity, it is, however, extremely interesting The youth, the beauty, and the piety of Rosmunda excite ou admiration, and engage our affections in the first moment o her appearance. The object of Falisco's enquiry gives birt to a new train of ideas without diverting the attention fro the lovely and unfortunate captive. When Rosmunda appear before Alboinus, we tremble for her safety. And the unex-

pecte

pected change in her fortune, in consequence of the advice of Falisco, occasions an emotion of surprize mingled with pleasure. The refusal of Rosmunda, and the persuasions of the nurse, again agitate our minds. And while the moral reflections of the chorus at the end of the third act, are gradually restoring our mental tranquillity, we are once more thrown into a state of perturbation by the hasty entrance of Helmichild, and the relation of the horrible circumstance of Alboinus obliging Rosmunda to drink out of the skull of her father. Rosmunda appears again, rendered, if possible, more interesting by the barbarous conduct of the king. She faints, and while she seems sinking into the arms of death, the nurse exhorts Helmichild to avenge the death of his mistress and her father. The play concludes with the recovery of Rosmunda, and an account of the barbarous tyrant's death. Thus, during the whole piece, the attention is never allowed to slumber. It is true, Rosmunda remains rather too long in a state of insensibility; but the interval between the departure of Helmichild and the assassination of the king, is filled up with choral songs suited to the melancholy occasion.(z) But

(z) Mr. Roscoe observes on this tragedy; "Rucellai has preserved his heroine from the crimes of prostitution and assassination, and has introduced a disinterested lover in the person of Almachilde, who excutes vengeance on the king from generous and patriotic motives. In justice to the author, it must also be observed, that the horrid incident upon which the tragedy is founded, is narrated only, and not represented before the audience." *Life of Lorenz. de' Medici, vol.* ii. *p.* 169. Count Alfieri has also made the story of Rosmunda the subject of a tragedy.

SECT. I. in order to bring the reader better acquainted with our autho it will be necessary to illustrate this slight critical analysi with a few extracts from the tragedy itself.

In the conversation which takes place between Rosmund and her nurse, previous to the renewal of her researches fo the dead body of her father, her age and character are thu unfolded:

> Bench' io non giunga al sestodecim' anno,
> Per che dovrei seguire il tuo consiglio,
> Qual' è d' onore, e di prudenzia pieno,
> Pur' io risponderò quel che mi pare
> Ch' alla nostra pietà più si convenga.

Amongst the entreaties and threats with which Rosmund assails Falisco, there is one passage which seems to have bee borrowed from the spirited declaration of Caterina, the widow of Girolamo Riario, when a scaffold for the execution of he tragedy. But it was reserved for a living Irish writer to do it ample justice. In the Ro inunda, or the Daughter's Revenge of Mr. Preston, we are presented with a drama perfect i all its parts. In the main action, historic truth is preserved inviolate; but the gloomy Co rade, the magnanimous and unfortunate Adolpho, and the fair and tender Adelaide, are thr well drawn characters of the poet's own creation, artfully and happily introduced to increas the interest of the piece, and assist in promoting the catastrophe. Perhaps in one instance Mr. Preston's tragedy, considered in a moral point of view, may be liable to censure. In th seventh scene of the fifth act, Rosmunda appears stained with adultery, rendered doubly fou by the motive with which it was committed. In this, it is true, the author does not depa from history;—but the stage should not render us familiar with the enormity of guil *Poetical Works of William Preston. Dub.* 1793. *vol.* ii.

children

hildren was raised before the fortress of Forli, of which she ad taken forcible possession. This passage, which displays nore spirit than delicacy, the curious reader may find buried n the obscurity of a note at the end of this memoir;(2) and, n the annals of Italy, by Muratori, vol. XI. p. 556. he may ind Caterina's declaration recorded.——While Falisco is rging the sanguinary Alboinus to marry Rosmunda, he takes ccasion to dilate on the policy of mercy with great art, and dmirable felicity of expression.

Io non nego che' l premio, e che la pena
Sien due ferme colonne, in cui s'appoggia
Ogni regno, e governo delle gente:
E come l'una delle due si frange,
Non ch' ambe, segue presto alta ruina:
Ma i dico ch' al re più si conviene
Esser avaro nel punire, e largo
Nel premio; ch' in quel largo, e' n questo avaro.
Considera l' altezza ove tu sei,
E che tutti i tuoi fatti e detti sono
Come in cospetto delle genti umane:
Onde quanto è maggior la tua potenza,
Tanto minor licenza usar convienti.

And on reading the following description of a bard singing n the royal presence, the praises of conflicting heroes, the magination takes wing, and carries us back to "other imes."

Or,

Or, giunto al fin della superba cena,
Albuin commandò, ch' un suo poeta
Cantasse le sue lode' n su la lira.
Costui cantando molti egregi fatti,
Disse, 'n tra gli altri, come' n la battaglia,
Uccise con sua mano' l re Cunundo.
Nel cantarsi di questo, alla regina
Scendean dagli occhi per le belle guance
Lacrime che pareano una rugiada
Scesa la notte infra vermiglie rose.

Soon as the viands were remov'd, and wine,
Sparkling in crystal goblets, circled round
The jocund board, the royal warrior call'd
The master of the song, and bade him chaunt,
In lofty strains, his feats of arms. The bard
Obey'd, and chose the monarch's favourite theme,
The death of warlike Cunimundus, slain
In battle by Albinus' wrathful hand.
The dire narration drew a flood of tears
From the bright eyes of lovely Rosamond,
Which, glistening on her vermeil cheek, appear'd
The dews of morning on the blushing rose.

From the Rosmunda let us pass to the Oreste, the happies
dramatic production of our author. "Dall' Oreste," say
Maffei, "è vinta la Rosmunda senza paragone; ed è fuor d
dubi

dubbio, che chiunque abbia senso per la miglior poesia, rico- SEC
noscerà quest' opera per una delle più belle, che o dagli anti- 1.
chi, o dai moderni siano mai state poste in teatro." It appears from this drama that invisible machinery was sometimes employed in the infancy of the Italian stage, and upon the occasion which I am about to adduce, it must have been employed with wonderful effect. While Thoas is dwelling, with a barbarous delight, on the sufferings of his captives in the amphitheatre, a distant noise, resembling a peal of thunder mingled with cries of distress, is heard. The chorus hastily entering, exclaim,

Ohu, ohu, ohu!

Thoas astonished and alarmed demands,

Ma che stridore spaventoso, e strano
Esce del fondo abisso della terra,
E col rimbombo i nostri orecchi intuona?

The noise and cries, it should seem, continue, and during the intervals of the pealing sounds, the chorus exclaim

O cielo, o terra, o fiamma, o mare, o venti,
O alto nume, o podestà suprema,
O architetto de' convessi chiostri,
Deh non mutate l'ordine del cielo,
E' non patite si confonda in caos
Tanta è si bella macchina del mondo.

ECT. I. But let us turn from this scene of horror to a smiling pic ture in the fourth act. In order to discover whether Oreste be an impostor, Iphigenia desires him to describe the orna ments of her bed.

Ifi. Ma dimmi; sopra il cappezzal del letto
Nella lettiera che v' er' ei dipinte?

Orestes replies:

Sopra un erboso rivo
Di corrente cristallo
Un vago, e bianco cigno
Sorgea, curvando il collo
Sopra' l candido grembo
D'una bella fanciulla,
Che tessea d' erbe, e fiori
Fresche ghirlande:
Poi con li schietti diti
Al petto, al collo, al fronte
Dell' uccel le ponea,
Dipingendo di fiori
Di più di color mille,
Come l' Iride il sole
Le piùmos' ale.
Et ei fiso mirando
Ne gli occhi di costei
Sospeso pende.

E po

SECT. I.

E poi l' aurato becco
Suavemente aprendo,
Parea dicesse, o donna,
Con visibil parlare,
Grazie vi rendo.

Moving, on the glassy tide,
Soon a cygnet we defery'd
Gently steering to the shore,
By the flow'ry margin moor.
Arching his redundant crest,
A gentle fair the swan carest,
On her snowy bosom lying,
While her busy fingers plying
Her light task, with gentle care
Wove him many a garland fair,
For his neck and for his crest,
And his gently swelling chest;
Where many a tint was seen to glow,
Richer than the show'ry bow;
O'er his gay and ivory plumes,
Shedding soft Elysian blooms.
Darting now an amorous glance,
Or sinking down in rapt'rous trance,
On her charms he seem'd to dwell,
And with silent transport swell;
'Till issuing from his golden bill,
These sweet accents seem'd to trill. &c.

SECT. I.

Here the classical reader will find our author improving on his original; for Euripides only makes Orestes slightly allude to the dissentions betwcen Atreus and Thyestes. But this is not the only instance in which Rucellai departs from his author with an happy boldness. Indeed he so frequently improves on the Greek tragedian, that he almost makes the subject his own. This tragedy was not given to the press during the life-time of the author. It lay for two hundred years after his death, concealed in the chaos of his papers. At length it was discovered by the Marquis Maffei, and published in his Teatro Italiano. Riccoboni speaks with pride of having, as he believes, first introduced it upon the stage.

Besides the Rosmunda and Oreste, Rucellai wrote a poem entitled le Api, of which M. de Tenhove thus speaks: "Homme de gout," says this elegant enthusiast, "dans vos promenades solitaires prenez quelque fois son poeme,

Ed odi quel che sopra un verde prato,
Cinto d'abeti e d' onorati allori,
Che bagna or un muscoso e chiaro fonte,
Canta de l'api del suo florid' orto.

And listen while he sings, at ease reclin'd
On a soft bank within his garden's bound, (a)
By piny cincture, and the laurel shade
In reverential gloom encurtain'd deep,

(a) We learn from the annotations of Roberto Titi on the Api, that it was written in the village of Quaracchi near Florence, where the author's villa stood. *Ven. 1751. p. 220.*

Where,

Where, ever and anon, a mossy fount
Tells its soft warbl'd tale. The toiling hive
All at their fragrant task, with busy hum
Are heard, wide hovering o'er the flowery meal.

The poem concludes with the author's determination to resume his tragedy of Orestes:

Ma tempo è, ch' io ritorni al tristo Oreste,
Con più sublime, e lagrimoso verso,
Come conviensi a i tragici coturni.

While Rucellai lay on his death bed, he solemnly charged his brother Palla to submit this poem to the perusal of his friend Trissino, and when it had received his last corrections, to dedicate it to him; an injunction which was religiously observed. Again, raising his faultering voice, "I would gladly" said he, "impose also on my dear Trissino, the irksome task of correcting my Oreste, if I thought the memory of our long friendship would serve to mitigate the trouble." (*b*) From a few brilliant touches in this drama, which indicate the master-hand of Trissino, it is conjectured that the wish of the expiring bard was not heard with indifference by his friend. It reflects honor on the memory of those amiable poets, that though they pursued together the same road to fame, their friendship was never interrupted by the rancour of jealousy, or the malignant whisper of envy; "un caratteristico indubitato," says Maffei, "d' ingegni

(*b*) This pathetic scene is decribed by Palla Rucellai in the dedication to the Api, (*Fir.* 1539); a poem which rivals, while it imitates, the fourth georgic of Virgil.

vera..

SECT. I. veramente grandi, e d' animi veramente nobili." United b congeniality of mind and similarity of studies, they were onl divided by death. They consulted each other on their differ ent compositions, and, the better to judge of the flow of thei numbers, they occasionally selected passages from their res pective poetical productions, for recitation in their socia meetings,

each finding like a friend,
Something to blame, and something to commend.

With talents so splendid, and a birth so illustrious, it is na tural to suppose that Rucellai would be induced to take a active part in the political concerns of his country, or his fa mily. Accordingly we are not surprised at finding hi abandoning the muses, in order to go as ambassador fro Florence to Venice, and as nuncio from the court of Rom to that of Francis I. With Leo, died his hopes of the po pora. But Clement VII. appointed him to the honorabl office of Castellano, or keeper of the fortress of St. Angelo ;(in the enjoyment of which office he died in 1526.

As Luigi Alamanni has ventured to dispute with Trissino th honor of first employing blank verse in "longer works," w shall notice him here, though he only appears in the humbl rank of a translator or imitator, amongst the early dramati

(c) Rucellai has left an immortal monument of his gratitude to Clement, in the apo trophe to the sacred college, in his Api, beginning

Però voi, che create in terra un Dio, &c.

writer

writers of Italy. Alamanni, like our Milton, not less fond of poetical than political liberty, soon threw off the shackles of rhyme. His imitation of the Antigone, of Sophocles, (*d*) which appeared in 1532, and his didactic poem of Coltivazione, printed at Paris in 1546, are both in blank verse. Besides these productions, he published Rime in various measures. In his Inni, or Hymns, which are praised by Crescimbeni, he uses the Greek divisions of strophe, antistrophe, and epode, giving to those divisions, in allusion to the original accompaniment of dancing, the denominations of ballata, contraballata, and stanza. Signor Signorelli vindicates Alamanni from the imputation of being the author of a tragedy entitled Libero Arbitrio.(*e*) This "diabolica tragedia," he says was written by Francesco Negri of Bassano, "apostata dalla nostra cattolico fede." Of the correctness of Signor Signorelli's information, I do not entertain a doubt; but I am sure he will not deny that the character of our author afforded grounds for the foul suspicion. Amongst the disturbers of the peace of

SECT. I.

(*d*) Giraldi Cinthio makes the eloge of this drama, in the discourse which Tragedy delivers after the Orbecche.

E quel, che 'nsino oltre le rigid' Alpi
Da Thebe, in Toscano habito traduse
La pierosa soror di Polinice.
I' dico d' Alamanni, che mi vide
Per mio raro destino uscire in scena.

(*e*) Count Mazzuchelli labours to prove Alamanni innocent of this diabolical tragedy; but acknowledges, at the same time, that he wrote a tragedy, which still remains inedited, entitled la Libertà. See his *Vita di L. Alamanni*, prefixed to *La Coltivazione*. *Ven.* 1751. p. 71.

Florence.

SECT. I. Florence, Alamanni makes a conspicuous figure. When I discover him haranguing a mob, or animating the drooping courage of an army,—flying from court to court for the vile purpose of inviting foreign powers to invade his country and redress the imaginary wrongs of his party;—when I hear him shouting for liberty, and, at the same time, observe him sowing the seeds of sedition, he reminds me of la Discorde in the Lutrin

" toute noire de crimes."

Stimulated by this frantic zeal in the cause of liberty, he not only broke the strong ties of friendship and gratitude, but over-leaped all moral and religious bounds. He has been accused of apostacy to his church; and, in consequence of having entered into a conspiracy to assassinate his friend and benefactor, cardinal Giulio de' Medici, he was obliged to abandon his country. To admire Alamanni, we must attend him to the literary meetings in the garden(*f*) of Bernardo Rucella

(*f*) The garden, or academic grove, in which Bernardo Rucellai held his literary meetings, and in which the Rosmunda of his son was recited in the presence of Leo X. stands near Florence, in the Via della Scala. The design of this garden and the palace (now the property of the Stiozzi family) to which it belongs, was given by Leon Batista Alberti. "Fece," says Vasari, "il disegno della casa, e l'orto, de' medesimi Rucellai nella via della Scala; la quale è fatta con molto giudizio, e con ordine, avendo, oltre agli altri molti agi, due logge, una volta a mezzogiorno, e l'altra a ponente, amendue bellissime, e fatte senza archi sopra le colonne." *Vita di L. B. Alberti*, p. 240. Alberti was not only an architect, but a painter, a sculptor, and a successful poet. Some of his sonnets are much admired, and his latin comedy of Philodoxios, which he distributed amongst his friends as the work of Lepidus, an ancient Roman poet, so effectually deceived the literati of his own and the succeeding age, that the younger Aldus published it as a precious remnant of antiquity. *Vide Elog. degli uomini illust. toscani*, ii. *Life of Lorenz. de' Medici*, vol. i. p. 87.

nea

near Florence, or follow him into the silent recesses of his study. He was born in Florence in 1495, and died at Amboise in France, in 1556. During his exile he found liberal patrons in Francis I. and Henry II. and his son was raised to a bishopric by the latter. Ariosto has honoured Alamanni with a niche in his Orlando Furioso.(g) SECT. I.

The tragic muse being now roused in Italy, found several votaries. Amongst the many pieces as well original as translations which covered her altars, the Edipo rè of Orsatto Giustiniano, a Venetian nobleman, particularly recommends itself to our notice, not only by its intrinsic merit, but from the adventitious circumstance of its having been the first drama represented in the famous Olympic theatre of Palladio in Vicenza, where, says an Italian author, it was recited in 1585, "con sontuosissimo apparato." This tragedy becomes attractive also from another anecdote attached to its scenical history. When it was first exhibited, the part of Œdipus was performed with great ability,—"sostenuta egregiamente," says an Italian critic,— by Luigi Groto, commonly called il cieco d' Adria, from the circumstance of his being totally deprived of sight; a misfortune which befel him on the eighth day after he was born. This extraordinary man was not only an actor of merit, but a fruitful and successful writer. His pastoral of Calisto,(b) and his comedies of Alteria,

(g) *Canto* xxxvii. St. 8.

(b) This pastoral, says the author, "fu recitata in Hadria del 1561; ma poi è stata rifor. mata dall' autore, e recitata pur in Hadria del 1582." It was printed in the following year at Venice; *appresso Fabio, & Agostin Zoppini.*

SECT. I. Emilia,(i) and il Tesoro, are honorably mentioned by Gra vina, and other Italian critics. But his tragedy of Hadriana which appeared in 1578, (k) gives him an aditional claim t our notice. In the prologue to this tragedy, the author tell his fellow citizens, that he is about to exhibit before them drama

Pien d'ogni oscuro, e tragico accidente,

of which the fable is drawn from the annals of their native country, and the ſcene laid in the ancient city of Adria. He then proceeds to describe the present state of that once flou- rishing city.

Che mandò il nome a quell' ingrato mare
Ch' n guiderdone a lei tolse la vita. (l)

and concludes with relating the manner in which he discover- ed the story of the "infelici amanti," upon

(i) Ricroboni considers the Emilia of Groto, as one of the best comedies of its age. He wrote an imitation of it, under the title of the Fourberies de Scapin, which was performed with success, by his own company, in Paris. The Emilia is a free imitation of the Epidicus of Plautus.

(k) I refer the first appearance of this tragedy to the year 1578 on the authority of the dedication, which is thus dated,—*Di Hadria, il dì 29. di Novembre* MDLXXVIII. But the earliest edition that I have seen is that now lying before me. *Ven.* 1612. *appresso Ant. Turino.*

(l) Pliny bears testimony to the splendour and opulence of the ancient city of Adria, *Hist. lib.* iii. *cap.* 16. At length the earth washed down by the rapid currents of the Po, filled its celebrated harbour, and forcing the water over the adjacent grounds, pro- duced the marshes whose mal' aria occasioned the desolation of the city. Trissino numbers Adria with those cities which

l' Adige, e la Brenta
Kiudon vicini a le paludi salse.

See *Ital. Liber. lib.* x. The topographical descriptions are not the least valuable parts of this neglected poem.

Whose

Whose mis-adventur'd, pitcous overthrows,
he raises his tragic structure. Their history, says he,

Scritta in duri marmi
(Ma men duri però della lor fede)
Trovò l'autor, con queste note chiuse
A te, che troverai, dopò tanti anni,
La scoltura di questo acerbo caso;
Si commette, che tu debbi disporlo
In guisa, che rappresentar si possa,
Porgendo un vive esempio in quella etate
D'un' amor fido a i giovani, ed a le donne.

Whether or no the story on which this tragedy is founded, exists, in any form, either in the romantic or genuine history of Adria, I cannot determine; nor have I been able to learn, whether such a tale had floated down on the breath of oral tradition, from the early inhabitants of Adria, to the time of our author. Some credit, however, is due to the confidence with which Groto addresses an audience whom he could not deceive, it may be presumed, in regard to the fact. Yet it will appear from an analysis of this tragedy, that its fable bears a close affinity to that of Shakspear's Romeo and Juliet; and that if Groto be not indebted to La Guilietta of Luigi da Porto for his subject, he frequently borrows both thoughts and incidents from that interesting little tale. (*m*)

Dissentions

(*m*) This novel was first printed at Venice, in octavo, in 1535. Becoming almost as rare as a manuscript, it was re-printed, a few years since in *Novelle otto rarissime, stampate a spese de'*

SECT. I.

Dissentions having arisen between Hatrio, king of Adria, and Mezentius, a neighbouring prince, the armies of both kingdoms met in a plain near the metropolis of Adria. The queen, attended by her court, ascends the battlements of an high tower, to view the battle. Hadriana takes advantage of the absence of her mother, to disclose the secret of her heart to her nurse. She acknowledges that Latinus, the son of Mezentius, her father's enemy, had not only won her affections, but that she had given him frequent meetings, at night, in the garden of the palace, under the sanction of the mago, or priest, a character answering to the friar in Shakspear's play. The nurse, with characteristic garrulity, censures her imprudent conduct, and cautions her against placing implicit confidence in the promises of her lover, as all men, she asserts, are false by nature. In the mean time, the queen returns to deplore with her daughter, the impending danger which threatens the kingdom. The battle still rages, and a messenger is dispatched to acquaint the queen that her only son had just fallen in single combat with Latinus. This event determines

de' i Signori, Giacomo conte di Clanbrassil, T. Stanley, et W. Burnett. Lond. 1790, *in* 4to. Of this curious collection only twenty-five copies were imparted by the press. Of the author of La Giulietta, the following account is given by Crescimbeni. *tom.* v. *p.* 91. Luigi da Porto, a Vicentine, was, in his youth, on account of his valour, made a leader in the Venetian army; but, fighting against the Germans in Friuli, was so wounded, that he remained for a time wholly disabled, and afterwards lame and weak during his life; on which account, quitting the profession of arms, he betook himself to letters, and wrote in volgar poesia. He died in 1529. It is to be hoped, that Mr. Malone will not withold from the public, his elgant translation of a tale so interesting, on many accounts, as La Giulietta of da Porto.

Hatrio

latrio to offer his daughter in marriage to the son of the King of the Sabines. This offer is gladly accepted, and the young prince hastens to Adria to receive his promised bride from the hands of her father. Orders are immediately issued to prepare for the wedding. Joy pervades every breast, but that of Hadriana, who laments a brother killed by her lover, and dreads at the same time, the loss of that lover. Unable to bear this accumulation of misfortunes, and incapable of devising means of extrication, she has recourse to the mago, (*n*) who commiserates her situation, and promises her an opiate which she is to take the night previous to the intended wedding. This opiate is to hold her senses steeped in sleep for sixteen hours. (*o*)

Ecco la polve, ch' io vo darvi, tanta
Vi farà morta star, ben sedici hore.

Dressed in her bridal robes and crowned with a garland of flowers which she had culled herself, she retires alone to her chamber; but perceiving forebodings which she vainly endeavours to suppress, she calls her damsels around her and bids

(*n*) "Il che intendendo la giovane dolorosissima sopra modo ne divenne ne sapendo che fare la morte mille volte al giorno disiderava: pur di fare intendere il suo dolore a frate Lorenzo fra se stessa deliberò". *La Giulietta.* (3)

(*o*) "Io ti daro una polvere, la qual tu bendola per quarantaotto hore, over poco meno, ti farà in guisa dormire, ch' ogni huomo per gran medico, che egli sia non ti giudicarà mai altro che morta." *Ibid.*

to

SECT. I. to each a melancholy adieu. She then summons her nurse and directs her to give her

un vaso d'acqua fresca
Per mitigar la sua fervida sete
Pria, che al sonno vicin si desse in preda. (p)

This vase, which contained the opiate disguised, she drains and then extending herself on her bed, falls into a profound sleep. The messenger who is sent in the morning to desire her attendance at the altar, finds her apparently dead.

Da' panni era coperta infino a' piedi,
Le belle man s' havea composto al petto,
Con le dita incrocciate, il volto, volto
Al ciel tenea. (q)

Loud lamentations are then heard throughout the palace and the preparations for the marriage ceremony give place to funeral rites. The body, followed by a long procession crosses the stage, attended by a chorus of priests chaunting a solemn dirge, which the mother and nurse of Hadriana occasionally interrupt with bursts of sorrow. The body is then deposited in the royal sepulchre. Latinus hearing accidentally

(p) "La notte vicino alle quattro hore, chiamata una sua fante, che seco allevata s'era, e che quasi come sorella teneva, fattosi dare una coppa d' acqua fredda dicendo che per gli cibi della sera avanti sete sostenea." *La Giulietta.*

(q) "Tornata nel letto come s' havesse creduto, morire, così compose sopra quello il corpo suo meglio che ella seppe, et le mani sopra il petto poste in croce." *Ibid.*

of the death of his mistress.(r) furnishes himself with poison, and hastens to the place of her interment. He enters, and carrying forth the body in his arms, pathetically laments her untimely death and his own cruel destiny. Resolving not to survive her, he swallows the poison, then pressing her again to his breast, he perceives some signs of life.

O Dio, che sento? sento pur nel petto
Batterle il core: e parmi, che si mova,
E che spiri: Hadriana, ch 'e cotesto?(s)

The princess awakes, and, perceiving Latinus, sinks, delighted, into his arms. A tender scene ensues. At length Latinus feels the operation of the poison, and acknowledges the rash deed, but urges Adriana to live for the sake of her family. He struggles and expires. The inconsolable Hadriana vows not to survive him. Just at that moment the mago enters, attended by a friend; he endeavours, in vain, to dissuade the princess from her purpose. She gives some direc-

" (r) Ivi la sua bella Giulietta sopra gli bracci di molti morti, come morta vide giacere, subitamente forte piagnendo così cominciò a dire: o occhi, che a gli occhi miei fosse, avere al cielo piacque, chiare luci, &c. *Ibid.*

(s) " Stretta et dimenata da Romeo nelle sue braccia, si destò, et risentitasi dopo un gran sospiro, disse, &c." *Ibid.* This affecting circumstance is omitted in Brooke's translation of Da Porto's novel. And as Shakspeare has not availed himself of it, it has been presumed he could not read the story in the original Italian; — which, perhaps, he never saw. " But this," as Dr. Johnson observes, " proves nothing against his knowledge of the original. He was to copy, not what he knew himself, but what was known to his audience."

tions:

SECT. I. tions in regard to the place and manner of her interment, and then, raising a dagger, which she held in her hand, stabs herself.

From this analytical review it is evident, that Groto not only followed da Porto in the conduct of his fable, but that he has also borrowed from him several thoughts and expressions. To the English reader it is now well known, that Shakspeare had similar obligations to Arthur Brooke, who published, in 1562, under the title of The tragical history of Romeus and Juliet,(t) a free translation, or rather imitation of da Porto's novel. And, perhaps, it will yet appear, that the English bard read, with profit, the drama under consideration. It is, I know, generally supposed, that Shakspeare was ignorant of the Italian language, though his works seem to afford strong internal evidence of his intimate acquaintance with the language, as well as the customs and manners of modern Italy. I shall not, however, presume to oppose my judgment to that of a *Farmer*, a *Steevens*, or a *Malone*: but while I am selecting specimens from this tragedy, I shall exhibit, in the notes, such passages from the English drama as may appear to me to be parallel, or, at least, strikingly similar.

Latinus, having passed the night previous to his departure, in amorous dalliance with Hadriana, in the garden of the palace, perceives, with sorrow, the approach of morning.

(t) See Mr. Malone's valuable edition of *The Plays and Poems of Wm. Shakspeare*, vol. x.

Lat.

Lat. S'io non erro, è presso il fin del giorno.
Udite il rossignuol, che con noi desto,
Con noi geme fra i spini, e la rugiada
Col pianto nostro bagna l'herbe. Ahi lasso,
Rivolgete la faccia all' oriente.
Ecco incomincia a spuntar l'alba fuori,
Portando un' altro sol sopra la terra.

Had. Ahimè, ch'io gelo. Ahimè, ch'io tremo tutta.
Questa è quell' hora, ch 'ogni mia dolcezza
Affatto stempra. Ahimè, quest' è quell' hora,
Che m' insegna à saper, che cosa è affanno.
O del mio ben nemica, avara notte,
Perche sì ratto corri, fuggi, voli,
A sommerger te stessa, e me nel mare?

Lat. If I err nót, the day approaches fast.
Hear'st thou the nightingale that wakes with us,
And thro' these lone shades trills her plaintive notes
In melancholy concert with our woes?
The dew, fast falling with our tears, impearls
The beauteous flow'rs that spread their mingled blooms.
Behold the east, my love. Alas, the morn,
Ris'n from the oozy caverns of the deep,
With rosy steps advances. In her train
Observe the bright divinity of day
Close following.

Had. Ah, an icy chillness'
Thrills thro' my veins. Unwonted tremours run
O'er all my frame convuls'd. This is the hour
Long doom'd. The fatal time, alas, is come,

ECT. I.

Which teaches me how vain were all my hopes.
O cruel enemy, invid'ous night!
Why urge thus rapidly thy ebon car?
Why haste, why fly to plunge thyself and me
In ocean's deep abyss?(s)

Both Groto and Shakespeare ascribe the same effect to th opiate. The first follows da Porto; the latter Brooke; an Brooke the Italian novelist.

Mag. Questa bevendo voi con l' acqua cruda,
Darà principio a lavorar fra un poco,
E vi addormentarà sì immota, e fatal,
E d' ogni senso renderà sì priva
Il calor naturale, il color vivo
E lo spirar vi torrà sì, sì i polsi,
(In cui è il testimonio della vita)
Immobili staran senza dar colpo;

(s) *Jul.* Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.
Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale. Look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east;
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountains' tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Romeo and Juliet, Act iii. *sc.* 5.

It is deserving of observation, that the nightingale, of which both Groto and Shakspear make so happy an use, is not mentioned, on the same occasion, either in the novel of da Porto or in the metrical tale of Brooke.

Ch

Che alcun per dotto fisico, che sia,
Non potrà giudicarvi altro, che morta.

Mag. When this, with water from the living spring,
Diluted, you shall drink, its potency
You straight will feel. A slumbrous trance will seize
Your drowsy senses. Your corporeal pow'rs
Will cease their agency. The genial warmth
That now with ardour glows thro' all your frame,
Will then be felt no more. The vivid dyes
Now mantling o'er your crimson cheek, will yield
To deadly pale. Within thee, for awhile,
The vital spark will seem to be extinguish'd.
Nay, even the busy pulse (that certain proof
Of this frail being) then will cease to beat.
To all who shall behold thee, thou wilt seem
Quite dead. (v)

When

(v) *Friar.* Take thou this phial, being then in bed,
And this dist'"ed liquor drink thou off;
When presently through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize
Each vital spirit; for no pulse shall keep
His nat'ral progress, but surcease to beat;
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou liv'st;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes; thy eyes' windows fall,
Like death when he shuts up the day of life;
Each part, depriv'd of supple government,
Shall stiff, and stark, and cold appear, like death;

And

SECT. I. When the mage gives the soporific draught to Hadriana he promises to send a trusty messenger to Latinus to acquain him with the plan which he has devised for her deliverance from the impending nuptials.

Mag. Tra tanto manderem fidato messo,
Occultamente in fretta al vostro amante,
Che poco appresso da noi lontan camina,
Con lettere secrete, ad avvisarlo
Di tutto 'l fatto." Il qual senza dimora
A dietro, l' orme rivolgendo, tosto
Sarà qui giunto, et egli, & (se sia tardo
Alquanto) io, vi trarrò dell' arca fuori,
E travestita andrete fuor con esso.
E così nella morte, e nel sepolcro,
La vita troverete, e il maritaggio.
Così l' ira paterna fuggirete,
Le odiate nozze, e con pietà commune
Senza alcun biasmo, senza alcun periglio,
Lieta cadrete al vostro amante in mano.

Mag. Near to the confines of your father's state,
Latinus lingers still. To him, with haste
And secrecy, a letter shall be sent,
Unfolding all our purpose. But should aught

And I in the borrowed likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,
And then awake, as from a pleasant sleep.

Romeo and Juliet. Act iv. *Scene* 1.

Prevent

Prevent his coming at th' appointed hour,
I will your waking carefully attend,
And, from the silent mansions of the dead,
With speed convey you to his longing arms.
Thus life and love await you in the tomb;
Thus shall you 'scape the hated nuptial bonds,
And shun your father's ire. (w)

When the supposed death of Juliet is announced to her father in the English tale, no comforter appears to mitigate his sorrows: but, in Shakspeare's play, the Friar is introduced, recommending resignation to the divine will, and endeavouring to persuade the afflicted father that, instead of lamenting the death of his daughter, he ought rather to rejoice at her escape from this world of care. In the tragedy of Groto we find the minister of Hatrio performing the same pious office. The friar's exhortation must be familiar to the English reader; that of Hatrio's minister begins thus:

Hat. Non mi dorrò d'haver perduto i figli?
Cam. Non perde il suo colui, che l' altrui rende.
A la terra dovransi i corpi, l' alme
A Dio, tutto 'l composto a la natura:

(w) *Friar.* Against thou shalt awake,
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift,
And hither shall he come, and he and I
Will watch thy waking, and that very night
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua;
And this shall free thee from this present shame.
Romeo and Juliet. Act iv. *Scene* 1.

Non

ECT. I.

Non biasmate colui che vi li toglie
Si tosto. Ma più tosto li rendete
Gratie, &c.

Abundant as the beauties of Groto's tragedy are, they are almost outnumbered by concetti. Even the prologue is not exempt from puerilities: at the commencement the audience are threatened with losing, during the representation,

Un' Etna di sospiri, e un mar di pianto.

Of sighs an Ætna, and of tears a sea.(ww*)

But the following sonnet, selected from our author's Rime, may be aptly compared to a string of false brilliants. Of this illegitimate offspring of wit, the muse of an ingenious friend, in a sportive moment, made the version which I subjoin.

SONETTO.

Se'l cor non ho, com'esser può, ch' i viva?
E se non vivo, come l'ardor sento?
Se l'ardor m'ange, come ardo contento?
Se contento ardo, il pianto onde deriva?
S'ardo, ond 'esce l'humor, ch'agli occhi arriva?
Se piango, come 'l foco non n' è spento?
Se non moro, a che ogn 'hor me ne lamento?
E se moro, che sempre me ravviva?

(ww*) Baciandolo spesso, un mare delle sue lagrime spargere sopra. *La Giulietta.*

S'agghiaccio,

S'agghiaccio, come porto il foco in seno?
  S'amor mi strugge, perche il segue tanto?
  Se da madonna ho duol, perche la lodo?
Questi effetti d' amor, sì strano modo,
  E sì diverso stil tengon, che quanto
  Vi penso più, tanto gli intendo meno.

How can I live when of my heart depriv'd?
  And can the bosom of a dead man glow?
  Ah, why so patient 'midst my pungent woe?
  And if I burn, whence are my tears deriv'd?
Is sorrow's fount within my eyes reviv'd
  From fire? Can flame survive where sorrows flow?
  If still I live, why thus my joys forego?
  Has sorrow still my final date surviv'd?
I burn,—I freeze,—and can I freeze and burn?
  If love torments me, why my plague pursue?
  If Lucy grieves me, why my fair applaud?
These dire effects of love, this varied mode
  Perplex me so, that still the more I view
  My plagues, the more my ignorance I mourn.

It may be said of Groto, that he "could never forgive any conceit that came in his way, but swept, like a drag-net, great and small." Is it then to be wondered at, that his writings should have served, as we are told they did, "a deprar il secolo?" This poet, "though blind, yet bold," undertook a translation of the Iliad of Homer, of which he published the first book in Venice, in 1571. And it is a fact as extraordinary

SECT. I. extraordinary, as it is well authenticated, that Groto was employed by the inquisition, to purge the Decamerone of Boccaccio, of its impurities! (x) In what year Groto was born I have not been able to learn; but we are informed by Crescimbeni, that he died at Venice in 1585, and was buried in the church of San Luca. A few years after his decease, his body was removed to his native city of Adria, where he now sleeps with his fathers.

Mention having been made of the TEATRO OLIMPICO, I shall here suspend the course of this little history, while I describe that elegant edifice, and offer a few observations on the construction of the Italian theatre at the period under consideration. A society of theatrical dilettanti, then residing in Vicenza, occasionally exhibited the favourite dramas of the day, upon a temporary stage erected in the Palazzo della ragione, or town-hall of that city. Desirous of a more commodious place of exhibition, they applied to Palladio for a design of a small theatre, and he gave them one on the simple plan of the ancient Roman theatre, preferring the semi-elyptic to the scini-circular form. This theatre stands upon an area of ninety two feet in depth, and eighty five feet in breadth. It is divided, like its model, into five parts, viz. Scena, Pulpitum, Orchestra, Spectatorium, and Porticus. As it was built with a view to tragic exhibitions only, all the scenical

(x) Vide *Istor. del Decam. di G. Boccaccio, p.* 659. an huge mass of curious, but ill-digested matter.

ornaments

ornaments are tragic, and the scenes fixed; differing in this from the ancient theatres, whose scenes moved on axes or oins, occasionally presenting different frontispieces. "Vel cena ut versis discedat frontibus," (y) says Virgil. The chord of the semi-elyptic of the theatre which we are describing, s cut by three streets,(z) the middle one of which, accordng to the precept of Vitruvius, presents palaces, obelisks, and other public buildings in perspective; and the other two, ordinary houses. And, the façade of the scena is ornamented with statues and bassi relievi, executed by Alessandro Vittoria.(a) From this description of the Teatro Olimpico it appears, that moveable scenery was, at that time, either unknown, or not used, in Italy; a fact of which this theatre is an existing monument. Nay, the circumstance of the Rosmunda of Rucellai having been represented in a garden, s another proof in point; to which we may add, that "Gu-

(y) *Georg. lib.* iii. *lin.* 24.

(z) The critics were long puzzled, to account for some passages in Plautus and Terence, which one character expresses an ardent and repeated wish to see a person then on the stage; while that person is, at the same time, in the other street, and cannot be seen by the actor, though he is by the audience. But the moment the Olympic Theatre arose, the difficulty vanished. It was an architectonic comment on the ancient comic poets. Mad. du Boccage, describing this theatre, observes, "là nous redescendimes pour en parcourir avec soin les différentes rues où les Daves, les Chremes arrivant sur la scene, pouvoient parler sans se voir. Alors je compris comment leurs trés-longs *à parte* ne blessoient point la vraisemblance. *Recueil des Œuvres, tom.* iii. *p.* 144." See also a *Dessein fait à l'imitation du theatre olimpique*, with the explication, in *Hist. du theat. Ital. tom.* i. *p.* 116.

(a) A description of this theatre, more minute than seemed consistent with my plan, is given in *Descriz. delle arch. pitture e scult. di Vicenza, Vicenz.* 1779. *part* 2. The description of De la Lande (*voy. in Ital. tom.* ix. *p.* 68.) may also be consulted with satisfaction; and that of Mad. du Boccage (*Œuvres, tom.* iii. *p.* 144.) read with pleasure.

SECT. I.

arini, in his Pastor Fido, ordered his theatre, says Riccoboni, in such a manner, that without any change of decoration, the spectators see the temple on the top of the mountain, the grotto at the foot of it, and the valley where all the scenes pass. Indeed, while the Aminta and Pastor Fido continued to be relished in Italy, they were often exhibited in gardens or in groves, with only such scenery as nature supplied, and a rude scalinata, formed of mounds of earth.(b) Vestiges of a sylvan theatre, in which the latter was often represented, lately remained in the garden of the neglected Villa Madama which hangs over the Tiber, in the classical vicinity of Rome. Nor have sylvan dramatic exhibitions yet fallen into total disuse. In the year 1789, Paesiello's beautiful opera of Nina was exhibited, by order of the king of Naples, in a small wood near Caserta. And so late as the year 1799, a sylvan theatre was formed in the fantastic gardens of the marquis Bevilacqua, in Ferrara.—But this rural excursion is leading me away from my subject. Let us return:—Sulpitius, who attributes to his patron, Cardinal Riario, nephew of the infamous Sixtus IV. the invention of painted scenes, gives us no reason to suppose, that the scenes which he describes, were moveable. In fact, observance of unity of place precludes the necessity of change of scene, and this law was rarely violated by the early Italian tragic poets. But the

(b) From certain passages in the Aminta of Tasso, and l'amoroso sdegno of Francesco Bracciolini, the immobility of scenery, at this period, may be inferred. In the Due Pellegrini of Tansillo the necessity of moveable scenery is precluded.

comic

comic muse, too playful to submit to restriction, often over- SECT
leaped the Aristotelian bounds. Comedy, therefore, soon I.
demanded mutable scenery. Machiavelli, in the prologue to
his Mandragola, promises the spectators great variety of scenes:

Vedete l'apparato,
Quale hor vi dimostra.
Questa è Firenze vostra.
Un' altra volta sara Roma, ò Pisa;
Cosa da smascellarsi della risa.

But the theatrical machinists of these times being not more expert than those of ancient Rome, performed their scenic changes under the concealment of a curtain, which answered to the Roman siparium.(c) This appears, from the stage directions given in some old Italian comedies. In the first act of the Timon(d) of Boiardo, we are told, "le cortine del cielo s'aprino, Jove appare cum Mercurio." Again: "come Timone ha passato el monte, le cortine se chiudino." When it was found necessary to diversify dramatic exhibitions with intermezzi or interludes, change of scene followed of course; for each interlude being a perfect piece in itself, required appropriate scenery. Appropriate scenery was not, however,

(c) The Siparium was different from the Aulæum. The former concealed the scene, the latter the stage. The Aulæum and its uses are mentioned by Horace. *Lib.* II. *epist.* I. *ver.* 189.

(d) This comedy was written by the author of the Orlando innamorato, at the desire of his magnificent patron, Hercules I. duke of Ferrara. It is founded on a dialogue of Lucian. The first edition appeared, without date, in 1494.

E I I. always confined to interludes: when the Italian translation o the Minœchmei of Plautus, by Hercules I. duke of Ferrara was first (1486) exhibited in that city, the scenery represented some houses, a sea-port, and a ship.(e)

But, to return from this digression: In the year 1546, the Canace of Sperone Speroni was printed surreptitiously in Florence, by Francesco Doni. The chorusses, which are deficient in this edition, were never supplied. This may be attributed to the rough treatment which the author received from a malignant critic immediately after the appearance of his tragedy. Speroni was too proud to reply, and his muse indignant, fled; so that the Canace has come down to us in its pristine state of imperfection. Yet the dramatic fame of Speroni rests on this unfinished production, which is "giudicata," says Crescimbeni, di pregio eguale ad ogni altra di nostra lingua." However, Crescimbeni allows, that the subject is "scellerato," and that the author is reprehensible for mingling rhyme with blank verse, and occasionally employing verses of eleven, seven, and even five syllables. Though the syllabical freaks of Speroni's muse might, prhaps, be

(e) The stage, on which this comedy was represented, was erected in the largest court of the ducal-palace, where the Chiesa Nuova now stands. It was constructed of wood, and cost only the moderate sum of one thousand crowns. In this humble theatre, several translations from Plautus, made by order of Hercules, were recited; also a sacred drama, intituled Joseph; and, as we have already observed, la Pamphila of Antonio da Pistoia. "And such was the enthusiasm of the new arts," says Gibbon, "that one of the sons of Alfonso I did not disdain to speak a prologue on this stage." It will, perhaps, gratify literary curiosity to be told, that the Prince alluded to by Gibbon, was Don Francesco, and the prologue, that of the Lena of Ariosto.

defended,

defended, we can offer no apology for the choice of his subject; in truth, we are almost tempted to doubt his moral purity, when we find him labouring to support his choice with authorities drawn from the amorous history of the Pagan deities, and the incestuous connections of the Jewish kings.(f) Nor does the conduct of the fable compensate for the horror inspired by the subject; for the sole source of our anxiety, and the hinge of the plot, is the difficulty attending the concealment of the child, with whose fate we are previously made acquainted by its departed spirit, which opens the piece with a long monologue.

OMBRA.

Uscito dell 'inferno
Vengo al vostro cospetto ombra infelice
Del figliuolo innocente
Di due fratelli arditi e scelerati
Canace, e Macareo ch' appena nato
L'ira de Eolo mio avo
(O' secoli inhumani!)
Diede mangiar à cani
Et pur, e dio, &c.

(f) *Canace trag. del. Sig. Sp. Speroni, alla quale sono aggiunte alcune altre sue compositioni.* Ven. 1597. I refer to this edition for Speroni's apology for his subject but the passages which I have given from the tragedy, are drawn from the first edition. *Fior.* 1546.

When

SECT. I. When Canace bears her guilty burthen to the front of th stage, and implores the aid of Juno in her *travail*, we ar disgusted. But our pity is moved when we behold her ex tended on a couch, taking a final leave of her child befor she plunges the fatal sword into her breast.

Posta s'era à seder sovra el suo letto
La Miserella vinta dal dolore
Del parto, e dal timore
De la morte futura
E tenea ne le braccia
Il figliuol pur mò nato
Padre de la sua morte
Basciandogli hor la faccia, et hor il petto.
Molle tutto e bagnato
Del suo pianto angoscioso:
Giaceali à piedi e' l volto,
Con le sue proprie mani
S'havea chiuso e nascoso,
L'infelice Nutrice;
Gionto con le parole e coi presenti
Paterni, alzò la testa lagrimando
E disse, qual arrivi
Tale t'aspettava io, ma se di questo
Mio figliuol innocente
Ch'altri mai non offese, se non forse
Me meschina e se stesso
Vieni a prender vendetta per pietade

Piacia

Piacciati d'indugiarla
Almen fin ch'io sia morta
Si che mi passi il core
Quel tuo coltello e non questo dolore.

This, indeed, is a picture by the hand of a master; it has, as Signor Signorelli observes, "una verità, un patetico, un interresse sì vivo, che penetra, ne' cuori e potentemente commuove e perturba." But the author does not always evince the same richness of fancy, and purity of diction. In the latter, it must be confessed, he often fails, though the original manuscript of this piece was revised, with anxious care, at the meetings of the Academia degli Elevati of Padua; yet Tasso and Guarini, whose deference for the taste and judgment of the author was heightened by their esteem for the man, took his style, with all its impurities, for their model. Hence the numerous conceits which disgrace their dramatic pastorals. From the imperfect state of this tragedy it may be presumed it was never publicly represented; a private recitation of it was, however, intended (1542) by the academici infiammati; but the death of Angelo Beolco, detto il Ruzante, (g) who was to have performed the principal part, defeated this design. It would be pleasing to know, but vain to enquire, what were

(g) Beolco is said by the historian of his native city of Padua, to have surpassed Plautus in composing comedies, and Roscius in representing them. *Brom. Scardeon. de antiq. Urb. Patavii. fol.* 255. The introduction of masked characters upon the Italian stage, is attributed to

ECT. I. were the author's ideas or wishes in regard to the costume or dresses of his characters, as Æolus is the hero, and the chorus composed of his attendant winds. In the monologue of the Ombra, scenical directions seem to be given in the following passage:

Questa
E l' isola d' Eolia, ond' e' Signore
Eolo mio avo: questo
E il carcer de suoi venti
Che egli scioglie, et affrena;
Quì il suo tempio hà Giunone,
Qui Eolo il sua palazzo.

But brilliant as many passages in this drama may be, and highly as the whole piece has been extolled by the cotempo

to this comedian. He died in 1542, and was buried "Patavii in Æde divi Daniëlis. juxt pratum vallis." His memory was honored with a monument, on which we read the following inscription:

V. S.
ANGELO BEOLCO RUZANTI PATAVINO
NULLIS IN SCRIBENDIS AGENDISQUE COMŒDIIS
INGENIO, FACUNDA, AUT ARTE SECUNDO
JOCIS ET SERMONIB. AGEBAT.
APPLAUSU OMNIUM FACETUS:
QUI NON SINE AMICOR. MŒRORE È VITA DECESSIT ANN. DOMINI MDXLII DIE XVII MARTII:
ÆTATIS VERO XL.
IO. BAPT. ROTA PATAVINUS TANTÆ PRÆSTANTIÆ,
ADMIRAT. PIGN. HOC SEMPIT. IN TESTIMON.
FAMÆ AC NOMIN.
P. C.
ANN. A MUNDO REDEMP. MDLX.

rarie

aries of the author, it is probable, that Speroni will be better nown to posterity under the character of Mopsus in the Aminta, than as the author of the Canace. Envious of the expanding glory of Tasso, he endeavoured to "damn with faint praise," the first sketch of the Gerusalemme Liberata. Being invited by Tasso to assist at a recital of a few cantos of hat immortal poem, in the presence of the duke of Ferrara, in vece," says the abate Serassi, "di unir, come dovea, i uoi applausi a quelli degli altri, ed animare il giovane poeta l compimento di così bella opera, si ne stette a sentir questa ecita con molta freddezza; di poi forse per far pompa della ua dottrina gli mosse alcune difficoltà con sì sottile artificio, he il povero Tasso fu in quell' instante quasi in procinto d' bbandonare l' impresa." This disgraceful circumstance is lluded to with a delicacy which Speroni did not deserve, in Atto I. Sc. 2. of the Aminta. After describing the court of Ferrara, Tasso, in the assumed character of Thyrsis proceeds:

Vidi Febo, e le muse, e fra le muse
Elpin seder accolto; ed in quel punto
Sentii me far di me stesso maggiore;
Pien di nova virtù, pieno di nova
Deitade, e cantai guerre ed eroi,
Sdegnando pastoral ruvido carme.
E, sebben poi (come altrui piacque) fec'i
Ritorno a queste selve, io pur ritenni
Parte di quello spirto: nè già suona

ECT.
I.

La mia sampogna umil, come soleva;
Ma di voce più altera, e più sonora,
Emula delle trombe, empie le selve.
Udimmi Mopso poscia, e con maligno
Guardo mirando affascinommi; ond' io
Roco divenni, e poi gran tempo tacqui:
Quando i pastor' credean ch' io fossi stato
Visto dal lupo; e' l lupo era costui.

Apollo and the Muses there I saw,
With heavenly sounds enchanting mortal ear.
Among the Muses was Elpinus seated,
Elpinus high in fame amongst our swains,
Spurning my rustic diffidence, to think
The fortune of Elpinus might be mine,
And wak'd to rapture I had never known;
My fancy heated with surrounding objects,
I raised my voice, and sung of war and heroes,
My former unaspiring themes disdaining,
The shepherd's humble, and unpolish'd lay
And though it was my fate to seek again
These woods; yet still my pipe retains a part
Of the bold character which then I caught;
It sounds not weak, but with a martial tone,
And makes the astonish'd woods and vallies ring
The envious Mopsus heard my epic strain,
And view'd me with malign, bewitching eye:
With hoarseness I was smit, and, for a time,

I could

I could not speak: the neighbouring shepherds thought
A wolf had seen me;—but the wolf was BLIND. (4)

STOCKDALE. (i)

Yet, had the father of Tasso taken Speroni to his heart, committed to him the correction of his Amadigi, and the education of his son, and, upon all occasions, spoke of his works with enthusiastic praise. Apologising to a friend, for omitting to write to him, he says, he was prevented

(h) The classical reader need not be told, that a notion obtained amongst the ancients, that if a wolf saw any man first, it deprived him of his voice for the present. Vide, *Theocr. Id.* xiv. *Virgil, Ecl.* ix. This notion still prevails in Italy. And it is probable that the disease which the ancient Irish called Lycanthropia, had its origin in the same superstition. *Spenser's View of the State of Ireland*, p. 221 of his *Works*. *Lond.* 1679.

(i) I have not only taken the liberty of borrowing, but of pruning Mr. Stockdale's translation of this passage, for I found it abounding in those "sentiments and lines of his own," which he acknowledges to have added in some places of his translation. (*Pref.* p. 15.) However, he atones for this liberty by his candour and his modesty. "They who are curious," says he, "to be acquainted with Taffo himself, will read the original, and they who are not may, perhaps, be satisfied with my translation." We are therefore authorised to deem his work rather an imitation than a translation. Viewing it in this light, (and in this point of view it has considerable merit), we should still consider a faithful version of the Aminta, illustrated with notes, as a desideratum in English literature. Amongst other qualifications indispensably necessary for such an undertaker, we may reckon an intimate acquaintance with the secret history of the court of Ferrara, and a topographical knowledge of that city, and its vicinity. Had Mr. Stockdale possessed these requisites, he would not have seemed to consider Elpinus and Mopsus as ideal personages, or have described the island of Belvedere as a "peninsula in a meadow;" neither would he have omitted to inform his readers, that the author is disguised under the character of Thyrsis, or that he makes Amyntas express his own amorous sufferings, and utter complaints of the cruelty of his mistress, Leonora, who appears to be shadowed under the character of Sylvia. Would it be refining too much to suppose that the arguments offered by Daphne in favour of the delights of love, were intended to pierce the breast of Leonora? "The Aminta," says Gibbon, "was written for the amusement; and acted in the presence of Alphonso II. and his sister Leonora might apply to herself the language of a passion which disordered the reason, without clouding the genius of her poetical lover."

SECT. I. from doing so, by a visit from Speroni, "che potrebbe far' aspettare gli angeli che andassero in paradiso." (k) And, in a letter to Speroni himself, he urges him to favour him with a visit, adding, with great elegance, "leave Padua to sigh your absence for a few days." (l) Indeed such was the respect and esteem in which Speroni was held in that city, that his absence, however short, must always have occasioned regret. The great Italian epic himself, in his Discorsi Poetici, (m) has left us a lively picture of Speroni, surrounded with his pupils and his friends, eagerly imbibing the stream of eloquence, which flowed from the lips of this literary Nestor. His apartment in the university of Padua often reminded him, he says, of the academies in which Socrates and Plato presided. "Mi rappresentasse la sembianza di quella academia, e di quel liceo, in cui i Socrati, e i Platoni haveano in uso di disputare." Speroni died on the third of June, 1588, in the eightieth year of his age. (n)

About this time flourished Giambattista Giraldi Cinthio, to whose novels our Shakspeare has many obligations. The fruitful invention of this author produced nine tragedies L'Orbecche, the best, and, I may add, the bloodiest of these was composed in two months, and represented (1541), with

(k) *Le Lett. di B. Tasso. Ven.* 1570. p. 54.

(l) *Ibid.* p. 48.

(m) *Ven.* 1587. p. 9.

(n) A portrait of Speroni hangs amongst the "portraits des empereurs," in the gallery of the Grand Duke, in Florence. In the excellent description of this gallery, by the Abate Zacchiroli, (*Firenze*, 1790,) Speroni bears the honourable title of "maestro di Tasso."

splendi

splendid scenical decorations, before Hercules II. duke of Fer- SECT.
ara, in the house of the author; (o) —a presumptive proof, I.
(did we require one) that Cinthio was not stimulated to write
by the clamours of an hungry muse. I shall select one pas-
sage from this tragedy, to show the author's happy powers in
describing scenes of horror.

Giace nel fondo di quest' alta torre
In parte si solinga e si riposta
Che non vi giunge mai raggio di sole,
Un luogo destinato a' sacrifici,
Che soglion farsi da' re nostri all' ombre
A Proserpina irata, al fier Plutone,
Ove non pur la tenebrosa notte,
Ma il più orribile orrore ha la sua sede.

Low in the bosom of this lofty pile
In gloomy loneliness sequester'd deep,
Unvisited by sun beam, or by star,
A place there lies for dire oblations made,
Which, to the ghosts of our departed kings,
To the pale queen of Hades, and her lord,
Are offer'd duly. There, not only night,

(o) It was afterwards represented in the presence of Cardinal Salviati, and the Cardinal of Ravenna, altered (at the suggestion of a Greek in the service of the former), according to the Greek model; but, not pleasing in that form, it was restored to the one which it originally wore; and printed, 1543, in Venice, *per il Giolito*, 12mo. Another edition was published in the same city, 1566, *per F. Lorenzini*.

But

SECT. I.

But the magnificence of boyers holds
Her court in dreadful pomp.

Descriptions of equal beauty may be found in the other dramas of our author; and, though he may have sometimes failed in the conduct of his fables, and in the discrimination of character, it must be allowed, that his tragedies would furnish materials for a large body of morality, particularly his chorusses, which not only abound in all the graces of lyric poetry, but in divine truths and moral sentiments. They are streams of rich ore rolling through hanging groves, smiling meads, and romantic vallies. I will instance the chorusses, which close the first act of the Cleopatra, and the second act of the Arrenopia, and the first ode in the Euphimia, beginning,

Se nube l'aria copre
Talhora, appar poscia anco.
Qual pria, sereno il sole, &c.

But let us return to the Orbecche, in order to notice the great excellence of the scene between the king and his minister, in Atto iii. "Me paroît" says Riccoboni, "un chef-d'œuvre. "Je puis me tromper; mais selon mon goût, je crois qu'elle peut se comparer à tout ce qu'il y a de meilleur chez les anciens et les modernes." This scene, on an attentive perusal, afforded me so much pleasure, that I felt, for a moment, inclined to subscribe to the opinion of Riccoboni, how-

ever extravagant it may appear. I wish I could dwell, with SECT. equal pleasure, on the conduct of the plot. But we recoil with horror from the streams of blood which deluge the stage, during the concluding scenes of this tragedy. (p)

Before we part with the Orbecche, it will be necessary to observe, that it was the first Italian tragedy, of which the PROLOGUE (p*) did not constitute the first act. This is noticed by the author himself, in the beginning of the prologue.

Essere non vi deve di maraviglia,
Spettatori, che qui venuto io sia,
Prima d'ognun, col prologo diviso
Dalle parti, che son nella tragedia. "

Let it not move your wonder, gentle friends,
That here I come, slighting a law, confirm'd
By hoary usage, a prologue to recite.

(p) This tragedy was represented, in ballo, in Naples, in the year 1783, and drew large audiences. A gentleman, who assisted at the representation, remembers, with horror, the successive deaths of Orbecche, her husband, her father, and her children, and the bloody display of the head and hands of Orontes on a reeking table! Yet, in number and barbarity of shocking spectacles, the Orbecche must yield to Titus Andronicus, a play, which was received with applause on the English stage in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and endured in the reign of Charles II

(p*) But the epilogue, which the tragic writers affected to despise, was adopted by the comic poets, and employed, in all ages of the Italian stage, either to solicit the applause of the audience in general, or the protection of the fair in particular. In the epilogue to the Amor Costante of Aless. Piccolomini (Ven. 1550), the ladies are requested to exercise their scissars upon the tongues of such of their male acquaintance as should dare to censure the comedy. "Se quest' huomini dicon mal de la nostra comedia, mordeteli la lingua con un paio di forbici de la vostra gentileza da cucire."

From

SECT. I.

From the main subject of our tragic play,
Wholly distinct.

Aristotle defines the prologue, "that entire part of the tragedy, which precedes the parode, or first entrance of the chorus." In fact, it was usually the argument of the piece, unfolding, we may say, all the secrets of the fable, and thus weakening, in a great degree, the intended effect of the peripetia, discovery, and pathos. Though the example set by Cinthio was followed by succeeding writers, the prologue long continued to anticipate the plot and its solution.

I am inclined to think, but I shall not venture to assert, that the EPILOGUE, as well as the Prologue, owes its independence to Cinthio: for, after the action of the Orbecche is finished, and the moral delivered by the chorus, Tragedy appears, and enters into an elaborate defence of the author's deviations from the common usage of the Italian stage; and expatiates on the merits of the several writers, who had preceded him in the same department of letters. This appendage to the tragic drama does not, however, seem to have been relished; at least, it was not adopted by the tragic writers who followed our author.

Led by the spirit of innovation, or impelled by the noble daring of genius, Cinthio proceeded still farther. Approving of the occasional suspension of the fable, which prevailed on the Roman stage, he departed from the Greek model, so servilely followed by Trissino and his admirers, and recommended

[illegible] by precept and example, the division of ACTS and SCENES.

On a careful review of Cinthio's tragedies, it appears to me, that he adheres closely to general nature, but is indifferent to [illegible] superinduced and adventitious. Though his scenes are occasionally laid in England and Ireland, Greece and Egypt, we do not recognise the natives of those countries in any of his dramas. His story requires Englishmen or Irishmen, Greeks or Egyptians; but "he only thinks on men." Neither does he attempt to localize his scenes: when he tells us the scene "è in Corintho", "in Londra", or "in Limerico, citta nobile d' Hibernia", we look around us in vain for topographical proofs of our being in Corinth, in London, or in the noble city of Limerick. "Giraldi Cinthio," says Rymer, "was a writer of tragedies; and to that use employed such of his tales as he judged proper for the stage." This is literally true. If, therefore, Cinthio was the inventor of the tales in his Hecatommithi, we may consider him as the first Italian writer who feigned the fables of his own dramas; and, if we may rely on the assertion of his son, he was the inventor of the PASTORAL DRAMA. "Giovambattista Giraldi," says he, "fù il primo fra poeti toschi, che cantasse Boscareccie Favole, e piacevoli amori di semplici pastori e vaghe ninfe." But if the Egle was not written a considerable time before it was represented (1543) in the presence of Hercules II. duke of Este, his claim to that honor

SECT. I. honor may be disputed.(q) We shall now proceed to detail such notices of this prolific writer as we have collected.

"Giambattista Giraldi Cinthio was born (1504) in Ferrara. His youth seems to have been divided between literature and love. In a letter to Cardinal Bembo, he says, "io haveva anco pigliato baldanza di mandarvi certi miei sonetti e canzoni da me composti, mentre ne miei primi anni arsi d'amoroso fuoco." The little poems alluded to, were, I presume, his Fiamme Amorose. His motive for sending these juvenile effusions to the cardinal was, at least, modest: "acciochè essi da lucidissimi raggi del vostro lume, tanto di splendore pigliassero," says the courtly poet, "che le tenebre loro fossero dalla vostra charissima luce fatte chiare e serene, et a me ne tornassero de neri et oscuri, candidi e lucenti." Such was the fulsome flattery of the day!—But Bembo was a poet, a

(q) It is asserted by Muratori, that Tasso "a été le premier qui ait introduit les bergers sur le theatre." *Dict. hist. litt.* T. But the shepherds of Tansillo trod the stage several years before the birth of Tasso. Tasso was born in 1543; and, according to Maurolico, a dramatic pastoral, by Luigi Pansillo, was represented, with great magnificence, at Messina in 1539. It should, perhaps, be observed, that, as Maurolico has not given the name of this pastoral drama, he is supposed to mean I due Pellegrini, a simple eclogue, by the same author. That this eclogue, however, was intended for the stage, is evident, from the following stage direction; "Qui canta il coro, aggiunta del capprucciosso." The Abate Serassi mentions three pastoral dramas, that were publicly represented, before the Aminta was written. See his preface to Bodoni's edit. of the *Aminta*, *Crisp.* 1789. But, if the date of la Flori, given by Fontanini, be correct, the palm is probably due to Maddalena Campiglia. *Fontanini Hist. Ven.* 1727, p. 63.

critic,

critic, and a munificent patron (r). When the amorous SECT. I.
flame of our author was nearly extinguished, he engaged in philosophical pursuits, and succeeded (1540) Celio Calcagnino, as public professor of humanity, in his native city. About the same time he was elected a member of the Accademia dagli Affidati of Pavia, under the name of Cinthio, (s) a name in which that of his family has sunk. Cinthio is remembered, but Giraldi is forgotten. Besides the Orbecche, as we have already observed, Cinthio wrote eight other tragedies, viz. la Didone, gli Antivalomeni, la Cleopatra, l'Arenopia, l'Altile, l'Eufimia, la Selene, and la Epitia. But his fame seems to rest upon gli Hecatommithi, and the Orbecche. His Egle, though the style is praised by Baretti, was, I be-

(r) If Bembo does not rank with the first order of Italian poets, his historical and critical productions must ever endear his name to the lovers of Italian literature. His dialogues "nelle quali si ragiona della volgar lingua," have been seldom surpassed in beauty and purity of diction, or in depth and justness of criticism. On this little work, which consists of only two hundred and thirty-two pages in octavo, (*2nd. edit.* 1539) Bembo was employed twenty-five years. If the reader should wish to know how this profound historian and accomplished statesman employed his time in rural retirement, let him turn to a letter, which Bembo addresses to Agostin Foglietta, from his villetta, near Padua. See a valuable collection of Bembo's letters, published in Venice, by *Sansovino, in* 1560, *p.* 40. Montaigne read the character of Bembo in his bust, which he saw in Padua. "Il y regarda de bon œuil le visage du Cardinal Bembo, qui montre la douceur de ses mœurs, et je ne sçay quoy de la jantillesse de son esprit." *Journ. du Voy. en Ital. tom.* i. *p.* 157.

(s) A complete collection of Cinthio's tragedies was published by his son Celso, in *Ven. appresso Giulio Cesare Cagnacini*, 1583, with a dedication to Alfonso II. duke of Ferrara. This edition is enriched with the author's able defence of his Didone, against the strictures of Bartholomeo Cavalcanti; in the course of which, he offers some learned and ingenious observations on such laws, in the respective arts of poetry, of Aristotle, and Horace, as he is supposed to have violated.

SECT. I. lieve, never a favourite with the public; and his epic poem o Ercolo had sunk, by its own weight, into obscurity. In th dedication to the Orbecche, he complains of "i morsi dell invidia, la quale come nemico armato sta sempre co' dent fuori per mordere e lacerare chi scrive;" and, in the same dedication, he has preserved the name of the projector and artificer of the little theatre in which his tragedy was repre sented, and also of the principal performer. After saying that he was urged to undertake the Orbecche, by his friend Girolamo Maria Contugo, "gentilissimo giovane, ed ornato di molte virtù; he adds, "composta dunque ch'io ebb questa tragedia, che fu in meno di due mesi, avendole già pa- rata in casa mïa il detto M. Girolamo sontuosa, ed onorevole scena, fu rappresentata da M. Sebastiano Clarignano da Mon- tefalco, il quale, si puote sicuramente dire il Roscio, e l'Esope de' nostri tempi."(s*) In the year 1569 our author died, in the city which gave him birth: and he has been recorded by Baruffaldi, in his history of the poets of Ferrara, as "non musarum alumnus, sed filius;" and, by Tasso and Guarini, he is numbered with the sweet swans of the Po.

About eight years after the appearance of the Orbecche, the Orazia of Pietro Aretino was published in Venice, dedi-

(s*) Riccoboni, in his examen of this tragedy, honorably notices Clarignano, "Il faut croire," says he, "que ce Clarignano da Montefalco, a été un grand comedien. On en fait mention avec les mêmes éloges dans les impressions d'autres comedies représentées à la cour du duc d'Urbin. Il semble que les auteurs de ce tems-là se faisoient honneur de faire sçavoir que leurs ouvrages de théâtre avoient été représentés par lui." *tom.* ii. *p.* 73.]

cated

ated to Paul III. To Aretino then is due the honor, SECT
laimed by the French, of introducing the valorous deeds of I.
he Horatii upon the stage; a subject which is recommended
o our notice by Livy. This tragedy is praised for its regu-
arity, the happy management of its situations, and the nice
liscrimination of its characters. It is divided into five acts,
nd enriched with moral inferences and observations, deli-
ered, by a chorus

in brief sententious precepts.

Baretti, speaking of the Orazia, says, "this is a tolerable performance of the celebrated Aretino; at least, there is nothing immoral in it, as in almost all his other numerous works." He might have added, that, on the contrary, it contains some passages, which breathe a spirit of piety. I shall transcribe one.

Il valore de l' asta e de la spada
E il timore dei riti e de le pene
Non tiene in alto le cittadi magne,
Come la riverenza e l' osservanza
De la religione e degl' iddii.

But the following lines are unworthy the author:

Fattor degli astri larghi e degli avari,
Che nell' empiree logge affiggi il trono
Del volubil collegio de' pianeti.

It

SECT. It should not be forgotten, that Fume delivers a prologue to the Orazia, in which she celebrates the talents, and the private and public virtues of several noble Italian families: a mode of adulation, (*t*) invented, or first introduced, by Aretino, and the origin, perhaps, of the Licenza of the modern opera.

Pietro Aretino was the natural son of Luigi Bacci, a gentleman of Arezzo. From the place of his nativity he was sent, while a youth, to Bologna, where he assisted, for some time, in the shop of a bookseller. Visiting Rome, under the pontificate of Leo X, he incurred the censure of the church by the obscenity and profanity of his writings.(*u*) Obliged to fly, he took refuge in Venice, where he died (1550) at an advanced age, despised and neglected. During the course

(*t*) This is the opinion of the author of *Stor. de teatri, tom.* iii. *p.* 121. But perhaps Sannazaro may dispute with Aretino the invention of this public mode of offering incense to the great: for, in a farsa, or masque, by this charming poet, which was represented in the presence of Alfonso, duke of Calabria, on the 4th of March, 1495, in the hall of the Castel Capuano (the present Vicaria) of Naples, Faith apostrophises Ferdinand I. in a strain of elegant flattery. See *Rime* subjoined to *l'Arcadia. Nap.* 1781. In the Orfeo of Politiano also we find a beautiful Latin ode, in which the Theban bard is introduced, singing the praises of Gonzaga, cardinal of Mantua, for whose gratification, says Mr. Roscoe, this drama was written, and in whose presence it was performed. This ode was afterwards superseded by the verses in praise of Hercules, which gave birth to the infant Hercules of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Riccoboni, who had never seen the Orfeo, gives it a place in his collection of Italian tragedies, and refers its first appearance to the year 1524, though it was published before the death of the author, which happened in 1494.

(*u*) In a painting of the Last Supper, which hangs near the great altar in the church of San Luca, in Venice, Aretino is represented standing; he is distinguished by a large beard. In

the

course of his various life, he assumed different titles;—some- SECT
times he called himself "il flagello de' principi,"—some- I.
times, "il divino Aretino." At length he became a prey to remorse. Amongst his acts of contrition, may be numbered his paraphrase of seven psalms, which are, says Crescimbeni, worthy to be read and admired. Amidst his debaucheries at Venice, he had the hardiness to solicit from Cardinal Bembo, through the medium of his friend Lodovico Dolce, a recommendatory sonnet for his Sirena;(v) and, in the following year, we find him addressing a letter to the same cardinal, in which there is a passage, so grossly indelicate, that the eye of modesty turns away from it with disgust. Yet Dolce, in his letter to the Cardinal, speaks of the affection which he (Bembo) bears to Aretino; and the Cardinal himself, in a letter from Padua, tells him, that he loves and honours his per-

here be any truth in the epitaph, written for his tomb, by president Mainard, the painter was guilty of a great impropriety, in introducing him into such company.

Condit Arctini cineres lapis iste sepultos,
Mortales atro qui sale perfricuit.
Intactus Deus est illi: causamque rogatus,
Hanc dedit; ille, inquit, non mihi notus erat.

Qui giace l'Aretin poeta tosco,
Che degn'un disse mal, fuor di Dio;
Scusandosi con dir; "non lo conobbe."

Both M. Misson and Mad. du Boccage give each a translation of this famous epigrammatic pitaph, but neither has preserved the spirit.

(v) *Lett. di diversi re, et principi et cardinali et altri, &c. a m. P. Bembo. Ven.* 1560. *vol.* i. 55.

son:

SECT. I. son: but our business is with the poet, not the man. shall therefore dash his character with a single stroke, an then dismiss him.

En talent il n'eut point d'égal,
Il n'en eut point en infamie.

Lodovico Dolce, the contemporary and friend of Aretine published, in 1566, a large collection of tragedies, compose of materials, drawn from the Greek and Roman stage; bu his character, as a dramatic writer, derives all its lustre fro his Didone and his Marianna;(y) the latter of which was re presented (1565) for the first time, in Venice, to an audienc of three hundred persons, upon a stage, erected in the palac of Sebastiano Erizzo, an accomplished nobleman of tha city,(z) and, when an attempt was afterwards made to repre sent it in Ferrara, in the palace of the Grand Duke, the con course of spectators was so great, that the performance coul

(y) It would seem, not only from the success of Dolce's play, but from the favourable r ception which el Tetrarca de Jerusalèn of Calderon, and the Mariamne of Fenton, met wi in the public, that this subject is peculiarly adapted to the stage; indeed, dramas, who

op'ning scenes disclose
Historic truth, and swell with real woes,

. . . hardly fail of enthralling attention, either in the closet or on the stage. If l'Hero . . . . . on the French stage, it was, says a French critic, "parcequ'il e . . . . . ur." But the subject was restored to public favour by Tristan and Voltaire.

. . . Sebastiano Erizzo, says Atanagi, was "un gentilhuomo venetiano honorato, e con . . . . . de' testimonii, buon, filosofo platonico, e buon poeta." Some of his sonnets a . . . . . in *Rime di diversi nobil. poet. toscani. tom. iii.* and a list of his critical and philosophic . . . . . be found in *Mem. de' scritt. ven. Ven.* 1744, p. 32.

no

not proceed. But the Didone (*a*) does not appear to have met with the same success: and we are told, that, at its second representation, an accident happened, which gave the author great pain, and made him regret, that the play had ever seen the light. Of the nature of this accident we are ignorant; but the fact itself is, it may be presumed, unquestionable, as the circumstance is related by Tiberio d'Armano, the actor that performed the part of the god of love, who disguised as Ascanius, recites the prologue. Riccoboni, who has analysed this tragedy, censures the poet, for announcing the appearance of the shade of Sicarus; but he acknowledges, that the character of *Æneas* is "conservé à merveille;" and bestows warm praise on the language of the piece. "La diction me paroît parfaite; la douceur et la majesté y regnent toujours, il n'y à pas une parole qu'on puisse lui reprocher, soit pour les sentimens, pour la morale, ou pour la politique, tout répond à la dignité tragique sans s'élever aux nuës, et sans descendre trop bas." He proceeds; "enfin je pense que si cette tragedie étoit traduite dans une autre langue, elle ne perdroit rien dans sa traduction, et que les nations les plus accoûtumées à entendre les pensées, et les expressions les plus élevées, goûteroient la diction de cette tragedie." In the catastrophe of his heroine, Dolce follows Virgil; but there is something more awful in her manner of preparing for death,

(*a*) This tragedy first appeared in Venice, 1547, beautifully printed *in casa de' figliuli di Aldo*,

ECT. I. in the Italian drama, than in the noble poem of the Mantuan bard.

Poi, che di grasse tede, e d'altri legni;
Atti à presto avampar d'ardenti fiamme,
Anna compose l'infelice rogo,
(Com' ordinato havea l'afflitta Dido)
Del gran palazzo in piu secreta parte
Et poi, che fur distese le ghirlande,
Et di funebri rami il luogo cinto;
Vi pose sopra di quel fier la spada,
I panni, e'l letto, ove gia tante volte
L'un petto à l'altro fu congiunto, e stretto:
Et l'Imagin di lui vi pose anchora,
Stavan d'intorno i consecrati altari
A Proserpina, à Giove, ed à Plutone.
Quivi co i bianchi crin sciolti la maga,
Terribile à guardar, subito apparse:
Laqual tra poco con horribil voce
Chiamò quanti son dei la sù nel cielo.
Et quanti spiriti van per l'aria errando,
I dii d'inferno, l'herebo, et l'immenso
Chaos, Hecate, et seco parimente
De la vergine dea chiamò i tre volti.
Poi si partì la maga, e andò cercando,
Dovunque piacque à lei, veneni et herbe.

Of Lodovico Dolce little is known that can be related with pleasure. Born in poverty, he lived and died in indigence;

gence; and the greater part of his life was embittered by li- SECT
nary warfare. His biographers speak with wonder of the I.
arly maturity and universality of his genius; and the mild-
ness with which he treats, in many parts of his works, his
malignant adversary Girolamo Ruscelli merits the praise
which they bestow upon it. Dolce died in the sixtieth year
of his age, and was buried in the church of San Luca, in his
native city of Venice, near his friend Aretino, and his adver-
sary Ruscelli. Besides the tragedies already mentioned, our
author published a translation of the tragedies of Seneca,(*b*)
whose coldness we may sometimes perceive creeping through
his original dramas. To study Seneca is to touch the tor-
pedo. In his paraphrase of the sixth satire of Juvenal, and
in the Epithalamio di Catullo nelle nozze di Peleo et di The-
ti,(*c*) he has preserved the spirit of his originals. The for-
mer is prefaced, with a short letter of delicate and elegant
compliment, to Titian the painter. In a little volume, con-
taining those two pieces, now lying before me, I find a Dia-
logo del modo di tor moglie,(*d*) which had probably been
read by Milton, as the following eulogy on matrimony may
be traced in the beautiful apostrophe to wedded-love, in the

(*b*) The first edition of this translation is that of *Venice*, 1560. It is dedicated to Giro-
amo Faleti, Ambassador from the court of Ferrara, to the republic of Venice.

(*c*) Printed at *Venice*, *in* 1538, by *Curtio Navo e fratelli.*

(*d*) This dialogue opens with a beautiful description of the vicinity of Bologna. It is
addressed to Federico Badoaro, in a prefatory epistle, which concludes in this singular
manner: "Con quella affettione, che è secretaria de l'animo vi bascio le vertuose mano."

SECT. I. fourth book of the Paradise Lost: "O matrimonio felice e santo s'io havesse parole uguali à le tue lode mai di commendarti non se ne vedrebbe stanca la voce mia. Per te è per mai sempre la vita gioiosa e lieta: per te gli' huomini si fanno sempiterni e gloriosi. Viva dunque, viva il matrimonio: e chi disidera di vivere e morire contento e beato elegga per il vero e unico mezzo il matrimonio." Of the dramatic labours of our author, Il capitano (e) and la Hecuba still remain to be noticed; but, as the former is a free translation from Plautus, and the latter a faithful version of a tragedy, on the same subject, by Euripides, I shall not dwell on those pieces. In the dedication to the Hecuba, (f) Dolce pathetically alludes to the misfortunes of his life. His Giocasta I have not seen; but I have read, with pleasure, an elegant tribute to his genius and learning, by Benedetto Guidi, in a sonnet, beginning,

Fra mille dotti, et honorati ingegni.

Several other writers of tragedy flourished at the same time with Dolce; but, as their productions have not given much celebrity to their names, we shall pass them by in silence, and proceed to notice the Soldato (g) of Angelo Leonico, a native of Genoa, published at Venice, in 1550. This

(e) *Ven.* 1547. Con la favola d'Adone novamente corretta, et ristampata.

(f) *Ven.* 1543.

(g) *Per. Comin. del Trino.* This tragedy is written in blank verse. The continuator of the Drammaturgia attributes a tragedy entitled Daria, to Leonico; an error into which he was led by Fontanini. Daria is the name of a principal personage in the Soldato.

drama

Drama is supposed to have given rise to the TRAGEDIA CITTADINA,(b) or domestic tragedy, a species of drama which has been so often and, so successfully imitated by the English, French, and Germans; but has, as yet, found few imitators amongst the Italians. This, however, should not excite our surprise; for the Italians had learned from the ancients, the masters under whom they studied, that the tragic muse should always appear clad in imperial purple. *SECT. I.*

Another species of tragedy, (if I may so term it) was invented in this age; I mean the PROSE TRAGEDY, or Drame. According to Baretti, the first Italian tragedy in prose, was the Tamar of Giambattista de Velo, which appeared in Vicenza, 1586. Riccoboni, who never saw this tragedy, erroneously observes, that the Cianippo of Agostino Michelle, which was printed in Bergamo in 1596, was the first and only prose tragedy of this age.(i) It was probably to prepare the public for the reception of this drama, that the author published in Venice, 1592, "Discorso, in cui si mostra, come si possano scriver con molta lode, le comedie, e le tragedie in prosa." We are, perhaps, indebted for this discourse to La Forza del Fato, overo il Matrimonio nella morte, a

(b) The French, literally translating the Italian denomination, call this species of drama "tragédie bourgeoise." The Dutch follow their example. Of this, an instance occurs in Sir C. Van Hoogeveen's tragedy on the death of Calas, a drama, written immediately after the melancholy event upon which it is founded, and dedicated to the widow and children of the unfortunate hero of the piece.

(i) Hist. du theatre Ital. *tom.* i. *p.* 109.

prose

SECT. I. prose composition, denominated OPERA TRAGICA DI LIETO FINE,(k) published in 1642, by Giacint' Andrea Cicognini. who is said, by Crescimbeni, to be the inventor of this equivocal species of drama.(l)

In Riccoboni's Catalogue des tragedies Italiennes, the drama which ranks next, in chronological order, to the Cianippò, is Della Passione di nostro Signor Giesu Christo. But may we not ask, how it got there? For this drama was written by Giuliano Dati, Bishop of San Leo, who flourished about the year 1445; and is supposed to be one of the first speaking dramas in the Italian language. It has, therefore, been unjustly degraded by Riccoboni: it should have stood at the head of his list, or have been totally omitted, as unworthy a place amongst the genuine effusions of the tragic muse. Indeed, Riccoboni has apologised for noticing it: "Quoique je me sois determiné à ne mettre dans mon catalogue aucunes des représentations sacrées que nous avons en très-grand nombre, je n'ai pas voulu manquer pourtant d'y insérer, celle-ci, parceque les circonstances en sont remarquables. Les représentations de la passion de Jesus Christ et des martyrs. étoient représentées communement dans des églises et cela se faisoit la semaine de la passion, et la semaine sainte. Celle que je rapporte ici fut représentée le

(k) *Fir. per N. le Paravia.* The prologue to this piece, like the Ideas of the Spaniards, is a dialogue in verse. The interlocutors are, Cupid, Mercury, and Death.

(l) Della volg. poesia, *tom.* v. *p.* 185.

jeudi-

eudi-saint dans l'amphithéâtre (of Rome); on ne sçait point SECT
en quelle année." Had Riccoboni been a little more sedulous 1
n his enquiries, he might have discovered, that this drama
continued to be represented in the coliseum, during a long
series of years; and that, in open contempt of the unities of
Aristotle, it begins with the last supper, and ends with the
crucifixion. But let us dismiss this unworthy offspring of
he tragic muse, and hasten to

Il Torrismondo of the immortal Tasso, a production that
heds lustre on the period before us. This noble tragedy,
which, according to the abate Serassi, was not only written
without the aid of the books (*m*) necessary to assist in con-
tructing the fable, in embellishing the subject, or in firing the
genius of the author, but, amidst a variety of distractions, in
' sickness and in sorrow," is yet allowed to rank with the
happiest effusions of Melpomene. " Il Torrismondo del
Tasso," says Crescimbeni, " tra le più scelte tragedie larga-
mente risplende." However, we must not conceal, that
there are several passages in this tragedy disgraced with con-
ceits, and that some of the descriptions are too diffuse; but

(*m*) Tasso, in his letters, often complains to his friends of the want of books, particularly during his confinement in St. Anne's, where he was even sometimes denied pen, ink, and paper, and often left in total darkness when the sun withdrew its beams from the grate of his dungeon. A sonnet, addressed to his cat, is preserved, in which he begs she will indulge him with the light of her eyes, in order that he might finish a poem, on which he was then employed. The sonnet concludes thus:

Fatemi luce a scriver questi carmi.

the

SECT. I. the vivid colouring, which glows in the description of th nocturnal inquietudes of Alvida, and in that of her death casts a ray of dazzling brilliancy over all the faults of thi piece. I shall transcribe the first of those celebrated pas sages.

Un non so che d'infausto, o pur d'orrendo
Ch' a me confonde, un mio pensier dolente,
Lo qual mi sveglia, e mi perturba, e m' ange
La notte, e'l giorno. Oime! gia mai non chiudo
Queste luci già stanche in breve sonno,
Ch'a me forme d'orrore, e di spavento
Il sogno non presenti; ed or mi sembra,
Che del fianco mi sia rapito a forza
Il caro sposo, e senza lui solinga
Gir per via lunga, e tenebrosa errando,
Or le mura stillar, sudare i marmi,
Miro, o credo mirar, di negro sangue,
Or da le tombe antiche, ove sepolte
L'alte regine fur di questo regno,
Uscir gran simolacro, e gran rimbombo;
Quasi d'un gran gigante, il qual rivolga
Incontra al ciel Olimpo, e Pelia, et Ossa,
E mi scacci dal letto e mi dimostri,
Perch 'io vi fugga da sanguigna sferza,
Una orrida spelunca, e dietro al varco
Poscia mi chiuda, onde, s'io temo il sonno,
E la quiete, anzi l'orribil guerra.
De' notturni fantasmi a l'aria fosca.

A nameless

A nameless horror chills my faculties,
Whose unknown cause is far beyond the ken
Of scar'd imagination. Sorrow's hand
Blends her confusion o'er the dismal scene.
Night follows days,—in vain;—for present still
It harrows up my soul: before my eyes,
Or to my wakeful fancy when I doze,
Still frowns the hideous prospect. Now, it seems
My faithful spouse is sever'd from my side,
And leaves me wand'ring thro' a boundless gloom.
And oft by day the melancholy walls
And figur'd marbles seem to blush with gore
And often from the old imperial tombs,
Where sleep the consorts of Norwegian kings,
Rushes the giant spectre with a noise
As when Ægæon storm'd the walls of heaven,
And launch'd Olympus at the wond'ring stars.
He frights me from my couch, and points below
A drear asylum, gloomy and profound;
And, lest I should retreat, with menace loud
Secures the pass behind. It is not sleep,
But those tremendous forms that people night,
I dread.

Here, indeed, we discover the author of the Gerusalemme Liberata. Nor is his hand less evident in the chorus to the first act, which, he confesses to a friend, cost him many a sleepless night. The mysterious replies of Indovino to the

SECT. I. ardent enquiries of Torrismondo, prepare the mind for th catastrophe, at the same time that they seem to invest it with a darker cloud;(m*) and, while the horrors of the plot ar thickening fast, Rosmonda's description (n) of the abode o the enchantress in the wilds of Dacia, where Alvida lay s long concealed, has the happy effect of what is termed, by landscape-painters, a *repose*.

Appresso un antro,
Che molte sedi ha di polito sasso,
E di pumice rara oscure celle
Dentro non sol, ma hel teatro, e tempio.
E' tra pendenti rupi alte colonne,
Ombroso, venerabile, secreto,
Ma lieto il fanno l'erbe, e lieto i fonti,
E l'edere seguaci, e i pini, e i faggi,
Tessendo i rami, e le perpetue fronde,
Si ch' entrar non vi possa il caldo raggio.
Ne le parti medesme entro la selva
Scritti ne'l libri, ch' arsero in Egitto,

(m*) If the fable of this tragedy has any foundation in history, it must have been for now it cannot be discovered in any work extant. Yet the author does not employ either o the previous preparations, customary in his time, of argument or prologue; though he seem to recommend the use of the latter, on such occasions, in a letter to the patriarch of Jerus lem, dated "de Ferrara il 3 d' Aprile, 1576." The prologue, says he, "deve, à mi giuditio, conformarsi, se non nel nome, almeno nell' offitio, e negli effetti, la parte dell' epo peia, ch' è prima in ordine, et in essa devono farsi tutte le narrationi delle cose passate, (e però alcuna particolar ragione no'l vieta) e dirsi tutto ciò, che parve per introduction dell favola, e per maggior chiarezza delle cose, c' hanno à seguitare."

(n) *Act* iv. *Scene* 3.

Sorg

Sorge un palagio al re tra i verdi chiostri
Ivi tua suora, et io giacemmo in culla.

But it is justly observed, both by Manso(o) and Menage,(p) that the last act is inferior to the preceding parts of the drama. Il Guastavini, having ably analysed the fable of this tragedy, concludes his elegant critique with exalting Tasso to the tragic throne. Il Torrismondo was first published in Bergamo in 1587. The dedication to this edition, is a tribute of gratitude, warm from the heart, to Don Vicenzo, duke of Mantua, (q) a prince of the accomplished house of Gonzaga, who had frequently visited Tasso in his prison, softened, by kind offices, the rigour of his confinement, and at length obtained his release.

The integrity of my plan may seem to demand a brief relation of the eventful and interesting life of Tasso; but what such biographers as Manso and Serassi (r) have related, who would tell again? Therefore, referring my readers to the nar-

(o) Vita di Torq. Tasso. *Ven.* 1761, *p.* 188.

(p) Aminta, con le annot. d' Eg. Managio *Par.* 1736, *p.* 351.

(q) Tasso's gratitude to this young prince was, at length, refined into love. The personal charms of his patron became the favourite theme of the poet. We find him, in a sonnet, telling the prince, that love

Posto ha la seggia sua ne' dolci giri;

and, immediately after, declaring

De' bei vostri occhi, e'l tempio hà nel mio core.

It was Virgil, singing the praises of Alexis.

(r) Mr. Hoole has epitomised, with his usual elegance, Manso's life of Tasso. *Jerus. Deliver. vol.* i. But the elaborate and interesting work of Serassi has not yet assumed an English garb. Serassi's work is common; but the narrative of Manso is so extremely rare, that the

SECT. narratives of those distinguished writers, I shall proceed to
I. observe, that,

In the same year that the Torrismondo appeared in Ber
gamo, Bernardino Lombardi, (s) a strolling player, basely
availing himself of Tasso's expanding fame, published a
Paris, under his name, a tragedy, by another author, with
the feigned title of La Gismonda. The drama thus disguised
was, we are told by Apostolo Zeno, the Tancredi of Federigo
Asinari, which was published, with its true title, in the fol
lowing year (1588) in Bergamo, by Comin Ventura. By
what accident the manuscript of this excellent tragedy fell
into the hands of Lombardi, I have never heard; nor have I
any further notices of the author to communicate but what I
learn from Baretti. "Federigo Asinari, Count of Cane
rano, was a native of Asti, a city in Piedmont. He was a
poet of reputation in his time; and there are two beautiful
medals, struck in honor of him by the famous engraver
Lione Aretino."

A tragedy bearing the title of La Gismonda, and founded
upon the same story of Il Trancredi (t) of Asinari, appeared,
in

author of *Letters of Literature* is not surprised, that latter biographers only speak of it from re-
port. (p. 374.) I am indebted to the friendship of that learned and ingenious gentleman for
the copy which I possess.

(s) "Lombardi was a comedian by profession, and of much repute, in Italy and France,
for his manner of acting." *It. Lib.* p. 107. He was also author of l'Alchimista, a comedy,
printed in Ferrara, 1583.

(t) A tragedy, built upon the pathetic tale of Guiscardo and Gismonda, was performed
before Queen Elizabeth in the year 1563. This play, which was the joint production of
five

in 1569, in Florence,(*t*) by Girolamo Razzi, a Florentine; "il quale argomento," says Crescimbeni erroneously, "fu egli il primo a trattarlo tragicamente." Razzi devoted his youth to the composition of dramatic productions; but being seized at length with some religious scruples, he turned friar, and, abandoning all his profane effusions to his friends, retired to the monastery degli angeli in his native city, where he died in 1611, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. Though it is asserted, by Crescimbeni that our author "pubblicò alcune commedie ben degne d'ogni lode, avanti che entrasse nella religione," it should seem, from the respective dedications to two of his comedies, (La Costanza,(*v*) and La Cecca(*w*) now lying before me, that all his dramatic productions were published, without his concurrence, or perhaps his knowledge, after he had assumed the cowl.

ve gentlemen of the Inner Temple, was published in 1592. A tragedy on the same subject, was written (probably in Latin) by Sir Henry Wotton, for private representation in Queen's College, Oxford. Though this drama has never been printed, it found its way into Italy, where it was read by the author of the Pastor fido, "who thought it (says a biographer of Wotton) neither an uncomely, nor an unprofitable employment for his age." *Reliq. Wotton. Lond.* 1651. It was probably submitted to the perusal of Guarini, by Sir Henry himself during his residence in Italy.

(*u*) *Pel Sermartelli.* Riccoboni carelessly places this drama, as well on his list of comedies as of tragedies. In one catalogue he informs us it is written in prose; in the other, in verse. *Hist.* i. *p.* 118, 140. It is in blank verse.

(*v*) *Fir. appresso i Giunti.* 1565.

(*w*) *Ven. appresso Ravenolde.* 1565. In the dedication to this comedy, which is dated 1563, we are told, that this drama "essendo compositione di M. Girolamo Razzi, *hoggi Monaco*, &c." So that Razzi had retired at least six years from the world, previous to the publication of his Gismonda.

In

ECT. I. In the year 1589, Don Valerio Fulgni, a native of Vicenza observing "con assai dispiacere," the predilection of hi countrymen for Grecian and Roman stories, and surprised that "fra tanti eccellenti poeti niuno poneva mano à trar quasi delle tenebre d'una compendiosa historia, alla chiar luce d'un nobil poema tragico, quel, non meno spaventevole che compassionevol caso, accaduto à i dì nostri nell' infelice isola di Cipro,"(x) determined to make Antonio Bragadino who, on the occasion alluded to, so bravely, but so unsuccessfully defended that island against the arms of Selim II, the hero of a tragedy. During his abode in a convent in Venice, he sketched the outlines of his drama; but he was interrupted in the prosecution of his work by an order from his superior to take charge of a monastery, situated upon

(x) The event upon which this drama is founded, is thus related by Sandys. "Famagosta which was erected by king Costa, the father of St. Katherine, is "eternized in fame by the unfortunate valour of the Venetians, and their auxiliary forces under the command of Signor Bragadino, who, with incredible fortitude, withstood the furious assaults, made by the populous army of Selymus the second, conducted by Mustapha; and after surrendered it upon honourable conditions, infringed by the perjured and execrable Bassa, who entertaining in his tent, with counterfeit kindness, the principall of them, suddenly picking a quarrel caused them all to be murdered, the governor excepted, whom he reserved for more exquisite torments. For having cut off his ears, and exhibited him by carrying of earth on his back to the derision of the infidels, he finally flay'd him alive, and stuffing his skin with chaffe, commanded it to be hung at the main-yard of his galley." *Trav. Lond.* 1658. p. 17 The skin of Bragadino, deposited in a marble urn, still remains in the church of St. Giovanni e St. Paolo, in Venice; and a monument to his memory, adorned with his bust, stands in the same church.

solitar

olitary mountain near Eugubio, (y) in the state of Urbino. SECT. I. Amidst the

" deep solitudes and awful cells "

f this holy retreat, he finished his tragedy of Bragadino, which he laid (1589) (x) at the feet of Francesco Maria II. Duke of Urbino, with a dedication, setting forth the motives of his undertaking. In this drama Fuligni appears a pleasing, if not a vigorous writer. The inexorable cruelty of the Turks, the heroic fortitude of the Venetians, and the flexible policy, resulting from effeminacy, of the Cypriots, evince an happy talent for the delineation of character. And though there is little action in the piece, the narratives are so animated, and heard with so deep an interest by the citizens of Famagosta, who form the chorus, that our attention is irresistably enthralled. In the interview between Bragadino and Mustapha, the character of the former, as a soldier and a christian, is well sustained.

Must. Conosci questa terra? è pur la dessa,
Che'l tuo senato à la tua fè commisse;
Che fù poscia da tè si mal guardata.

(y) " Gubbio, Eugubio, autrefois Iguvium." *Geog. de Busching. tom.* viii. The monastery over which Fuligni presided, was dedicated to St. Ubaldo.

(x) *In Pesaro. app. Gir. Concordiæ.* As only seventeen years elapsed between the perpetration of Mustapha's act of treachery, and the appearance of this tragedy, it is probable that Fuligni thought with Racine, that remoteness of place affords the same conveniences to a poet, as length of time. And as there are no female characters in this piece, we may presume it was written with a view to representation in a monastic theatre.

Bra-

Bra. La riconosco si, me fù guardata
Da me si mal, che tù giamai potessi
Quinci con tante forze tue cacciarmi.
Nè ti potrai vantar (se non menteindo)
D' haverla col valore, ò col sapere,
Ò mentitor, del tuo Selimo fatta.
Nè dir tù puoi con verità, ch' io mai
Di fè mancassi à tè, nè al mio senato,
Nè tè offendessi, ò altrui de la tua gente,
Da che fei tregua, et si trattò di pace:
Benche tù, come reo, mi fai condurre
Fra questi stretti nodi, e duri ferri.
Se pur fallai, se pur merto alcun biasmo,
Lo merto sol, perche facil fui troppo
A' fidar me con gli altri à la tua fede,
E darmi in tuo poter con questa terra.

This is the language of a soldier, stung by treachery, an fearless of all the tortures which ingenious cruelty can in vent, or despotic power inflict. But, when Mustapha ask

Perche dunque non vien hora'l tuo Christo
A' trarti di mia mano, e liberarti
Da lunga, d' aspra, e da penosa morte?

Bragadino's reply savours so strongly of the cloyster, tha we seem to lose the soldier in the monk: we no longer hea the language of

On

One, whose occupation rarely scans
The distance 'twixt enjoyment and the tomb.

It is but justice to our author to observe, that his style is seldom disgraced with conceits, often elegant, and always perspicuous. Yet we seek in vain for the name of Fuligni, in the ponderous tomes of Crescimbeni.

Francesco Mondella, a contemporary of Fuligni, made (1582) another act of cruelty and treachery committed by Mustapha, the foundation of a tragedy, entitled Isifile.(a) From the argument of this piece we learn, that Mustapha having, by an act of treachery, obtained possession of the city of Salamis, in the isle of Cyprus, he had the children of Dandalus, the deluded governor, put to death in the presence of their father, and then ordered him to be flayed alive. This horrid deed is only narrated in the drama; but the heads of the children, and the hands of the father, accompanied with a bowl of poison, are presented to Isifile, the wife of Dandalus, in the presence of the audience. On receiving this bloody gift, Isifile retires in order to prepare for death; and, shortly after, when she is just raising the bowl to her lips, Mustapha enters, dashes it from her hand, and, ordering her to be bound, sends her a captive to his sovereign.(b) The chorus then moralizes, and the piece concludes. The author has

(a) *In Verona, appresso Sebastiano, e Giov. dalle Donne*, 1582.

(b) The historic event upon which this tragedy is built, happened in the year 1570. Girolamo Preti celebrates the magnanimity of Orsata, one of the female captives sent to Selim

SECT. I. has left no means untried to heighten the horror of his drama. In the first act Juno appears, directing the furies to instigate Mustapha to effect the total destruction of the kingdom of her fair rival. Soon as she departs, an angry ghost rises; and we are afterwards led on gradually to the bloody spectacle which I have described. Mondella seems to have been so much pleased with the manner in which Sophonisba takes a final leave of her attendants, that he copies, almost literally, Trissino's words.

O donne mie, hor, c' hà piacuito
Al ciel, che questo sia l' ultimo giorno,
Che se habbiamo à veder, restate in pace;
E se giamai in tempo alcun v' offesi
Ve ne chieggio perdon.

ISIFILE.

O donne mie,
Quest' è l' ultimo dì, ch' i abbia a vedervi;
Restate in pace; e chiedovi perdono,
Se mai fatto v'avvessi alcuna offesa.

SOFONISBA.

Animated by the success of Ruccellai's Rosmunda, Antonio Cavallerino undertook a tragedy on the same subject, which he published in Modena in 1582.(c) But he has not,

Selim, who, "per liberarsi dal pericolo, che sovrastava alla sua honestà, accende in alto mare, il fuoco nelle munizioni dell' artiglieria, facendo strage di sè stessa e di tutta l' armata." *Poes. di G. Parti, Ven.* 1556. *p.* 114.

(c) *Rosmunda regina. In Modena. Nella stamperia di P. Gadaldino*, 1582.

like

like Ruccellai, preserved his heroine from the crimes of pros- SECT. I.
titution and assassination: he has made her guilty of both, and
then fly with her lover to Ravenna. Urged by Almachilde
to depart

Pria, ch' il veggiam turbare
Da venti aversi o terribil procella,

She retires with him, and the chorus advancing, sing an ACROSTIC on the name of Manzuoli, bishop of Reggio, and the piece concludes. As a chorus, moulded into so whimsical a shape, seldom occurs. I shall transcribe this lyric effusion.

Una donna del choro.

V oi, ch' acceso d' honesto ardente zelo,
E di santi pensier colmo e d' amore
S alite, ove non può vostro valore
C oprirsi mai da invidioso velo.
O voi felice a pien, che solo al cielo
V olgete il giusto, e sacrosanto cuore;
O ve sparto non è di speme il fiore
M ai da tempo veloce, o caldo, o gelo,
A voi s' inchinan gli elementi, e'n voi
N ascer non fanno, o morire empia voglia
Z efiro dolce, od altri horridi venti.
O mbra di bene o mal, ch' ange, et invoglia
L 'animo human, non parte i piacer suoi.
O fortunato, a voi ne i suoi tormenti.

SECT. I.

Besides a dedication to Manzuoli, the author prefixes a short discourse on the fabric of verse best suited to tragic dramas, in which he gives the preference to verso sciolto, because "rima denota pensamento, e premeditatione, e che le cose ch' appaiono pensate, e premeditate, estinto il verisimile estinguono insieme la compassione, e lo spavento, che nascono ne gli spettatori da quella credenza c' hanno, che le cose accaschino allhora in scena."

In the same year appeared another tragedy by the same author, entitled, Il conte di Madona.(*d*) This drama is founded upon an interesting event in the history of the lower empire, which is related at length in the argument, and which seems to have been chosen merely with a view to flatter the house of Este. This, like the former drama, ends with an acrostic, of which the subject is Alphonso II. Duke of Ferrara.

Riccoboni enumerates two other tragedies,—l' Ino, and il Telefonte,—by Cavallerino, both of which have eluded my researches. And both the author and his works seem to have escaped the notice of Crescimbeni: at least he has not honoured Cavallerino with a place in his Istoria della volgar poesia.(*e*)

(*d*) *In Modena. Nella stamperia di G. P. Gadaldino,* 1582.

(*e*) Amends for this neglect have been made by the Marquis Maffei, who says, that Cavallerino was the first, amongst his countrymen, who treated, dramatically, the subject of Merope. "Primo de tutti fu Antonio Cavallerini, che ne lavorò il suo Telefonte, Stampato a Modona l' anno 1582. Per argomento ci premise la versione della favola d' Igino, qual sembra

Nor has he treated with much more respect, Gio. Paulo Trapolini,(e*) a contemporary of Cavallerino, though he was author of three tragedies—l' Ismenia, (f) l' Antigone,(g) and la Thesida,(h) which had once their admirers. Trapolini wrote because he thought that "come tutte le altre cose mortali al solo uso, e commodità de gli huomini son' prìncipalmente create, così gli huomini stessi non à se soli son generati;" and that therefore he ought, not only to endeavour at being useful in his generation, but SECT. I.

In life's visit leave his name.

But he seems to have been most particularly actuated by a pious wish to warn his readers against incurring the displeasure of heaven. This is, at least, the moral of his Thesida.

CHORO.

Dal costei chiaro, e manifesto esempio
Veder si può, che lungamente ascosi
Star non posson gli inganni; e spettialmente,

sembri ch' ei vedesse più corretta, e nel suo principio più sana; secondo cosa adunque, e senza allontanarsene la sua tragedia ei compose." *Proemio alla Merope. Ver.* 1745. p. 17.

(e*) Crescimbeni, in his chapter *degli Echi, de' venti incantenati, &c.* slightly mentions Trapolini as author of il Tirsi, un egloga boschereccia, but takes no notice of his tragic dramas in any other part of his abora te work.

(f) *Pad.* 1575. In the dedication to his Antigone, the author mentions the facility with which he composed this tragedy.

(g) *Pad. per Lorenzo Pasquati*, 1581. This edition is embellished with a wooden print of the interior of a theatre, with the audience in the pit, and Mercury delivering the prologue at the front of the stage.

(h) This tragedy was first printed in *Padua, per Lorenzo Pasquati*, 1576; not in 1575, as Riccoboni sets forth.

Quando

EC T.
I.

Quando l' alta bontà del ciel s' offende.
Però studisi ogn' un à viver vita
Piena di fede, e al suo fattor gradita.

Trapolini, like several other dramatic writers of his ow country who preceded and followed him, evokes the slumber ing dead. But the powers of the Italian dramatists, seem t forsake them when they enter the magic circle." In th manners and language of their preternatural beings there i nothing characteristic, no mysterious solemnity; they seer neither

Spirits of health, nor goblins damn'd:

They retain all their humanity about them, and are onl ghosts in name. An exception, it is true, seems to occur i the play which we shall next consider; but a single exceptio cannot avert a general censure exacted by critical justice. I however, Trapolini fails in giving appropriate language t his ghosts, he has certainly succeeded in describing a fury Megæra's picture of herself is such an "inveterate likeness, that we turn from it with horror. The serpents interwove with her hair, seem to hiss.

Trapolini has not servilely followed either Euripides o Seneca, but he has borrowed occasionally from both. Th Italian drama, like the Greek tragedy, is opened b

Ve

nus ; (*i*) and Diana appears in the last scene of both plays. But n the manner of Phœdra's death, (*k*) our author departs from Euripides ; and he imitates Seneca in exhibiting the mangled orse of Hippolitus upon the stage.

The departure of Asinari and Fuligni from the beaten mythological track, was imitated by a writer of uncommon powers, who boldly plunged into the gloom of Egyptian history, in quest of a subject for the exercise of his dramatic talents. Antonio Decio da Horte, a celebrated civilian, and an intimate friend of Tasso, weary of the jejune studies of his profession, wandered for awhile in "the primrose path of poesy." His first poetical essay, was the tragedy of Acripanda, which

(*i*) After Venus, in imitation of Euripides, opens the play, the shade of the mother of Hippolytus appears. To this shade our author gives the name of Antiope, though Hippolyta the name by which this fair amazon is generally known, and under which she had been introduced to his countrymen, some centuries before, in the Theseide, an epic poem by Boccaccio. (4) This poem, however, is of such rare occurrence, that it might have escaped the observation of Trapolini : it certainly eluded the researches of Fontanini, or must have been very slightly inspected by him; for he places the quarto edition, printed at Venice, 1528, at the head of his list of "Tragedie in verso." *Della. eloq. ital. p.* 13; *Ven.* 1727.

(*k*) In Euripides, Phœdra

fasten'd by the neck ob cenely dies.

racine poisons her. But Seneca, Trapoline, and Mr. Smith, make her stab herself. In the talian drama, Ismenia relates the manner of her death :

la trovo
Sopra' l letto distesa,
E con la spada istessa
(Con cui fù minacciata) il cor traffitta.

was

SECT. I. was published at Florence, in 1592, (*l*) at the desire of Don Giovanni de' Medici. This extraordinary production, which raised its author to great literary eminence, demands our particular notice.

The play is opened by the ghost of Orsilia, the murdered wife of the king of Egypt, who quits the dark abyss for the purpose of instigating her son, the king of Arabia, to avenge her death. The following passage in her address to light, (*m*) on first perceiving its "cheering beam," will probably remind the reader of Milton's hymn to that glorious emanation of the Deity.

ò chiara

Luce del sol, ch' à gli occhi nostri scopri
I gran campi de l' aria, e tutto questo
Bel magisterió de la man superna;
Io pur ti miro, e godo pur, ma poco
Di mirarti e goderti à mi sia dato.

(*l*) *Nella stamperia del Sermartelli*, 4to. A friend of the author, who stiles himself Cor fido pastor Tiberino, appears as the editor, and dedicates the drama "all' illustrissimo, et r verentissimo mons. Fulvio Orsini." Another edition was printed at *Vienna*, 1617, with dedication, of which the flattery is heightened by a whimsical disposition of the letters wh compose the name of Luigi Mutosi, to whom it is inscribed.

(*m*) The seeming impropriety of introducing a ghost meeting the light of the sun, wi strike the English reader who has been taught to think with Horatio, that at the crowing the cock,

Whether in sea, or fire, in earth or air,
Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine.

But Decio should not be hastily censured: he has, perhaps, been as true on this occasion t the popular superstitions of his time, as our Shakespeare was to those of his age and country.

Bu

ng the theatrical taste of the times, is the relation of the reatment of the hostages sent to the king of Arabia, and the conduct of Acripanda upon that occasion.—Ussimano, king of Egypt, having murdered his first wife Orselia, in order to obtain the hand of Acripanda, exposes her infant son on the banks of the Nile. After having been suckled for some time by a wolf, the child is found by a shepherd, and carried to the court of the king of Arabia, where he is at length exalted to he throne. Stimulated by the shade of his mother, he engages in a war with the king his father, whom he obliges to make a shameful retreat from the field of battle. Flushed with his victory, and confident in his strength, he offers haughty terms of peace. The terms are acceded to, and the children of Acripanda sent as hostages. The cruel Arab, knowing them to be the children of the woman whose charms had occasioned the death of his mother, dooms them to immediate death, and acts himself as executioner, severing, with his sword, the heads and limbs of those innocent victims of his vengeance from their reeking bodies. A female attendant, who had formed part of their train, collects their scattered members, and putting them into a bag of white linen, (candido lino) returns to the court of Ussimano. Meeting the queen, she relates the horrid circumstance, and produces her bloody burthen, declining, at the same time, to open the bag. But the queen insists on seeing the remains of her children. The maid complies with a trembling hand, and as she

ECT. produces each limb, minutely details the manner in which it
I. had been struck off.

(Ahi!) fu la bella garzonetta, à cui
Prende con una man gli aurei capegli
Con l' altra un colpo su l' eburnée spalle
Crudelmente distese ed hor quel membro
Ed hor questo ferille, ed al fin poi
Del crudo ferro suo la punta acuta
Cento fiate immerse,
E cento la ritrasse
Fuor del candido petto
Solo à i colpi d' amor per segno eletto.
Cadde ella à terra prona,
E nel cader' entro un sospiro accolta
Versò l' anima fuora,
E il bel volto leggiadro
Qual colto fior, che il color serbe ancorá, &c.

A long dialogue ensues between the chorus and the queen, who at length summoning all her resolution, proceeds to assort the reeking parts in order to reduce them to their original form.(*n*)

Non languite hor, vi prego,
Ma intrepide, e sicure
Durate, ò mani, à la mest' opra, mentre

(*n*) Theseus employs himself in the same way in the Hippolytus of Seneca, when the mangled limbs and body of his son are brought upon the stage.

Che

Che numerando, e raccogliendo io vado
De i miei figliuoi le dissipate membra;
E lor ridóno un' altra volta quella
Forma, ch' hebber da me ne l' alvo pria.

This pious office being performed, the queen retires and the chorus conclude the act with an ode. But let us turn away from this scene of horror. We have had "blood enough." I cannot, however, dispatch this drama without observing, that the scene in which the shades of Acripanda's children appear, announcing their death, and informing their mother that they go before to prepare a seat for her in heaven, evinces a master-hand. It is impossible to read this scene unmoved; but in representation it must have been deeply and tenderly affecting.

ATTO IV. SCENA I.

ACRIPANDA, CHORO, OMBRE DE' GEMELLI.

Omb. O cara madre, ò madre
Diletta à i figli tuoi
Volgi le luci à noi.
Acrip. Non so s' odo una voce, ò parmi udirla.
L' udite voi vaghe fanciulle?
Chor. Udianla.
Acrip. Io pur m' aggiro intorno,
Ne veggio ond' esca il suono.
Omb. Volgiti madre, e mira
Che tuo figlio son' io, tua figlia è quella;
Non ci conosci al volto? à la favella?

ECT. I.

Acrip. (Ahi!) ch' io vi miro, e siete
I cari miei gemelli, * .
Ma non so, s' io vi miro
Io sogno, o s' io son desta.
Che fate in quella nube?
Miracoli vegg' io,
S' io non vaneggio, e siete
Veramente i miei figli.
Scendete in questo seno,
Perche imprimer' io possa
Su le guanci vivaci,
Affettuosi baci.

Omb. In van cerchi baciarme
O' genetrice amata,
Ch' appressandoti à noi
Stringer, ed abbracciare
Sol' l' aura, ò nulla puoi.
Noi siam l' anime nude
De' tuoi fidi gemelli,
Che vederti bramiamo
Prima, ch' al ciel saliamo.
Ma la parte mortal, che tu ne desti
Per man crudele ed empia
Del rè nimico, sotto
La già promessa pace,
Su la riva del Nilo
Dilacerata giace.

Acrip

Acrip. Spenti voi siete adunque
Ed io crudele anco rimango vivo?
Viva rimango?

Ond. (Ah madre!)
Spiacer non ti devria
Che noi da questa morte,
Che voi vita chiamate,
N' andiamo à vera vita,
E cittadin ne facci
La sù del mondo eterno
Giove, che n' apparecchia
Altro scettro, e corona
Di quella, che n' havrebbe
Un giorno cinto il crine
Nel vostro orbe terreno.
Hor qual puoi tu maggiore
In noi gloria bramare?
Ecco frà mille, e mille
Altre anime innocenti
La sovra, ove la sorte
Nulla ha potere, e il caso
Di tempo in spazio breve
Calcherà il nostro piè l' orto, e l' occaso.
Hor non voler co i tuoi
Pianti turbar questa quiete in noi.
Restati adunque, e lieta
Giù ne mondani chiostri,
Vivi gli anni tuoi, madre, e gli anni nostri.

Acrip.

SECT. I.

Acrip. (Ahi!) ahi, dove hor ne gite
Sciolti dal mortal velo?
Omb. A' veder preparar tua sedia in cielo.
Cho. Hor mira, hor mira come
Velocissimamente
Ver le stelle volando
Fendono l' aria, e quella
Nube fra quelle nubi
Sparsa nube divene.
Ho visto il ciel la suso,
Ch' in un s' è aperto, e chiuso.
Acrip Spariti (ahi!) sono (ahi!) sono
Dileguati da me, qual' al sol nebbia
Che debbo far? che debbo
Credere? (ah) rispondete
Verginelle pietose.
Cho. Attonite rimase
Non men di te, noi siamo,
Non disperar' ancora,
Ch' esser falsa è reina
Illusion potrebbe.

ACRIPANDA, CHORUS, GHOSTS OF THE TWINS.

Ghosts Thou to whom our birth we owe,
Lov'd in life, and in the tomb,
Turn and hear a tale of woe,
Turn and mark thy childrens' doom.

Acrip.

Acrip. Heard I not a solemn strain
Rising on the midnight gale?
Yonder—hark! it comes again.—
Did you hear it, virgins, tell?

Cho. We too heard it.

Acrip. Round and round
Still I turn my aching sight;
Still I hear the doleful sound,
Still the cause is lost in night.

Ghosts. See thy daughter! see thy son!
Thou, to whom our birth we owe,
Are those features still unknown,
And these kindred sounds of woe?

Acrip. Ha! your mangled forms I view
Thro' the parting veil of night!
Is the hideous vision true?
Does a dream delude my sight?
If I wake, ah tell me why,
Hov'ring on yon cloudy car,
Thus you come, with fun'ral cry,
Sailing thro' the midnight air?
Why those pageants of the tomb
In terrific grandeur drest?
If ye be my children,—come
Share my kiss, and soothe my breast.

Ghosts

SECT. I.

Ghosts. Learn the law by fate impos'd;
Ne'er a mother's kiss to share;
She's a disembodied ghost,
I, a form of empty air.

Gentle mother, ah resign
Fruitless hopes and wishes vain;
Our cold lips will never join;
No embraces soothe your pain.

Yet before each mounting mind
Sought the beaming orbs above;
Hither down our flight declin'd
To discharge a debt of love.

But those tenements of clay
Which maternal love bestow'd,
Mangl'd by a tyrant, lay
Close by Nile's dishonour'd flood.

Arrip. Cease, ye languid springs of life,
Cease, and give the contest o'er!—
Still condemn'd to mortal strife,
Never must I see them more.

Ghosts. Why lament our flight to know
From these dens of death and shame,
Scenes which mark the sons of woe
Still with life's degraded name?

Wh

SECT. I.

Why lament to see us soar
Where the tides of transport flow,
Gifted from the heavenly store
Far beyond our low'r below?

Would you wish to lure us down
Here to wander with the dead?
Tho' the bright Imperial crown
Sparkled on each youthful head?

What could thy maternal prayer
Add to what we now enjoy?
Thousands here our transport share,
Elder brethren of the sky.

Fickle chance no longer here
Runs her ever changing round;
Sad misfortune's frown severe,
Never clouds the hallow'd bound.

From the morning where it springs
To sweet Hesper's twinkling light,
Glancing, on its nimble wings,
Speeds our momentary flight.

Banish sorrow,— banish fears;—
Taint not thus our pure delight;
Nor with unavailing tears
Deprecate our heaven-ward flight.

In this vast sublunar vault
Tho' condemn'd to wander still,
May the memory of our lot,
Every hour with transport fill.

May the fates benignant join
To thy life's allotted space,
All the long revolving line,
Sever'd from our hapless race.

Asrip. Whither, denizens of air,
Whither do you flit away?

Ghosts. Your allotment to prepare
In the bounds of endless day.

Chor. See! they mount, and now they go,
Like an arrow from the bow.
Now they skim the starry bound!—
Now they pierce the blue profound!
Melting now, like vapours gray,
See the phantoms flit away,
Where their forms they seem to shroud
Deep in yon disparting cloud!
High the heavenly portal glows;
Angels open,—angels close!

Asrip. Ah, they're gone,—for ever gone,
Like the dew that meets the sun.
Virgins, what for me remains,
But ceaseless grief, and mental pains!

Ch

Chor. Smit with soul-subduing fear,
With thee we shed the mingling tear,
While faint hope, with dubious ray,
To our bosom finds its way;
Hope, that wayward fancy bred
This illusion of the dead.(o)

We may say, in the words of Dr. Johnson, had Decio often written thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him.

Here I shall take occasion to observe, that the scene which I have just transcribed, is one of the first SCENES-A-MACHINE that I have met with in a regular Italian tragedy, though the invention of machines is generally attributed to the Italians. Even the French, who are so jealous of the honor of their stage, acknowledge to have received machines from the Italians. "Enfin," says the author of le Theatre François, nous leur sommes redevables de la belle invention des machines, et de ces vols hardis qui attirent en foule tout le monde à un spectacle si magnifique."(p) That the Italians were the first, amongst the moderns, who brought theatrical machines to perfection, I am willing to allow; but pantomimes-à-machines were certainly exhibited in France so early as the year 1378, at an entertainment given by

(o) This chorus offers a subject for the pencil, which seems to invite the hand of a PETERS, or a BEAUCLERC.

(p) *Lyon.* 1674. *p.* 51.

SECT. I. Charles V. to his uncle the emperor Charles IV. (q) a period at which the Italian stage was only struggling into existence. To trace the origin of machines would be difficult, if not impossible. They prevailed amongst the Greeks and Romans. Vestiges of machines, partly burned, were found in the ruins of the theatre, which was discovered at Herculaneum (r). And it is recorded in the page of history, that an actor, who represented the character of Icarus in the presence of Nero, failed in an attempt to fly across the stage, and fell at the feet of the emperor.

The drama under consideration suggests another observation. Though the unity of action is preserved in this piece, and, in the Hadriana of Groto, the unity of time is grossly violated in both. They should therefore be entitled HISTORIES rather than tragedies; a distinction, however, which does not seem to have prevailed at any time in Italy, but which, according to an elegant antiquary,(s) long obtained in England. Dramas wearing this equivocal form should not be tried by the general laws of tragedy or comedy. They are a distinct species; and, as Dr. Johnson

(q) *Hist. de la vie privée des Franç. tom.* iii. *p.* 321. See also another curious work by the same author, entitled *Fab. ou contes du* xii. *et du* xiii. *siecle tom.* ii. *p.* 153. In the account of the entremêts exhibited at Tours, in 1457, in the presence of the ambassadors of the king of Hungary, several machines are described. See *Chron. d'Enguer. de Monstrelet. vol.* iii. *p.* 73.

(r) *Descrin. d' Ercol. da Venuti, Rom.* 1748.

(s) *See Relig. of Anc. Eng. Poet. vol.* i. *p.* 147, *Lond.* 1794.

justly

justly remarks, nothing more is necessary to all the praise which they expect, than that the changes of action be so prepared, as to be understood; that the incidents be various and affecting, and the characters consistent, natural, and distinct. This praise is certainly due to the dramas in question.

As Maffei has honored with a place in his Teatro Italiano, the Astianatte of Bongianni Gratarolo, it may seem, perhaps, entitled to our particular notice. But if my readers be not inclined to renew their acquaintance with Juno, Iris, Andromache, and Ulysses, they will, I am sure, excuse me from entering into an analytical review of this tragedy, and be content with my informing them, that it was first published in Venice in 1589. I shall however acquaint them, on the authority of this drama, with what, perhaps, they did not know before, that

Se Troe,
Ha casa in terra, la sua casa è Troja.

This I learn from a dialogue between Juno and Iris in the first act. This tragedy is divided into acts, without the division of scenes; thus, as Maffei observes, the author steers a middle course between the ancients and the moderns. Besides the tragedy under consideration, Gratarolo wrote L'Alcea and la Polissena, the latter of which, says an enlightened critic, "è singolarmente lodevole, ed anche in oggi non irrecitabile." Our author was born in Salò, amongst the

orange

SECT. I. orange and citron groves, which perfume the romantic shores of the lago di Garda, the roaring Benacus of Virgil. (t)

Passing over some dramas of inferior note, we shall conclude our account of the tragedies of this age, with the Semirumide (u) of Muzio Manfredi, and the Merope of Pomponio Torelli. Animated by the example of his predecessors in the dramatic walk, Manfredi, with a bold hand, unfolds the gates of the silent tomb, and evokes its "sleepers." He opens his tragedy with the ghost of Ninus breathing vengeance. When this angry shade is about to depart, it is met by another ghost, that offers to assist in promoting its bloody design. The compact being made, both ghosts stalk off together, and the action of the play commences. Manfredi has not, it must be confessed, invested these phantoms with

(t) ——— teque

Fluctibus et fremitu assurgens, Benace, marino! *Georg.* lib. i.

And thee, Benacus, roaring like the sea. Warton.

It was a soft, serene evening in the month of May, when I visited this lake. Its surface was unruffled, and its shores were silent; yet I felt the justness of Virgil's description. Such a great body of water agitated by a storm must indeed roar like a sea.

(u) Crescimbeni denominates this drama "una tragedia boscherecia," a proof he never read it; for in no instance does it partake of the nature of a pastoral drama. From the few imperfect notices which he gives of the author, it appears, he was as little acquainted with Manfredi as with his works. In fact, he confounds la Semiramis boscarecia (*Pav.* 1678 of our author, with his tragedy of the same name. In the dedication to this pastoral drama to the duke of Parma, Manfredi accounts for his choice of a patron: "Con la qual ere denza, e con la qual sicurezza, dovendo, io al presente stampare anche questa mia boscarecc delle nozze della medesima Semiramis; poscia che due sorelle sono, ambedue soggetto r nendo di una stessa persona; è gran ragione, che io à due fratelli le raccommandi e dedichi The tragedy is dedicated to Odoardo, the duke's brother.

th

he solemn dignity suited to the object of their sublunary SECT
visit, or their preternatural characters; there is nothing of I.
he august and terrible about them; they bring no "blasts
rom hell." Indeed Manfredi seems to have understood the
uman character better. The passions which contend for
empire in the breast of Semiramis are finely described; and
he character of Ninus is admirably supported. And though
he ghosts at the commencement prepare us for the catas-
rophe, there is a gradation of interest in the piece which
ever allows the attention to slumber. Of the style an
talian critic thus speaks: "bisogna confessare che questa
Semiramide per uguaglianza, nobiltà e grandezza di stile è
er versificazione vince quasi tutte le tragedie del cinque-
ento." If I were desired to select a subject for the pencil
rom this tragedy, I would recommend the following de-
cription of Ninus standing over the bodies of his wife and
hildren.

Giunto al fiero spettacolo si stette
Pallido, freddo, muto, e privo quasi
Di movimento: e poco poi dagli occhi
Li cadde un fiume lagrimoso, e insieme
Un-oimè languidissimo dal petto
Fuori mandò, così dicendo. (*v*)

(*v*) This is so close a copy of a passage in the *Gerusalemme* Liberata, c. xii. st. 96, eginning,

Pallido, freddo, muto, &c.

hat Mr. Hoole's translation, with a slight alteration, will serve to give the English reader a lear iden of Manfredi's words. I have therefore taken the liberty to borrow it.

All

SECT. I.

All pale and speechless for awhile he stood,
Awhile, with eyes unmov'd, the bodies view'd:
At length releas'd the gushing torrents broke,
He drew a length of sighs, and thus he spoke.

The Semiramidi first appeared (1593) (*w*) in Bergamo while the author (a descendant of the lords of Faenza) wa at Nancy in Lorraine, in the suite of a princess whose nam has not reached us. This tragedy, we are told, owes its birt to the words with which Justin terminates his account of th enterprize of Semiramis: Ad postremum cùm concubitu filii petisset, ab eodem interfecta est; and the construction o the fable is supposed to be copied from the Orbecche of Gi raldi.—It should be remembered to the honor of Manfredi that he visited Tasso in his dungeon at Ferrara, and endea voured to mitigate the rigour of his confinement. Serassi ha inserted in his elaborate Vita del Tasso, a passage of a lette from our author to a friend, in which he bears testimony t the sanity of Tasso.—With what mingled emotions of pai and horror did I explore this dungeon in the year 1792 Damp, dimly lighted, and too low in many parts to allow m to stand erect, I could hardly persuade myself that I wa visiting the "prison-house" of the greatest modern epic poet and of a truly amiable and highly accomplished man, whos only crime was ambitious love!(*x*)

Her

(*w*) Maffei has given this tragedy a place in his Teatro Italiano. *Ver.* 1723. *Ven.* 174

(*x*) Alphonso's motive for imprisoning Tasso has given birth to a great variety of con jectures. But I will confess myself inclined to the opinion of M. Mirabaud. Vide *Vie d Tas*

Here I would willingly close my account of the labours of the tragic muse in Italy during the sixteenth century; but as I have mentioned the Merope, I feel myself obliged to notice it more particularly. Pomponio Torelli, count of Montechiarugolo,(y) who flourished about the close of this century, and who, acording to Maffei, was the last tragic poet of Italy who used the CORO FISSO, or stationary chorus, had this, and four other tragedies, recited in the Accademia degl' Innominati(z) of Padua, where the Merope was received with ap-

SECT. I.

Taise. Paris, 1735. *p.* 69. *Life of Tasso* prefixed to *Doyne's trans. of The Delive. of Jerusal. Dub.* 1761. Tasso was, I believe, enamoured of the Princess Leonora; and there is good reason for supposing, that the Princess was not insensible to the talents, accomplishments, and personal charms of the author of the Gerusalemme liberata. Anxious to vindicate Leonora from any criminal passion for Tasso, Serassi asserts she was a temple of honor and chastity—"tempio d'onore, e di castitate." *Vita del Tasso. p.* 150. That this fair temple did not yield to the amorous assaults of Tasso, I am willing to believe; but it is probable that Alphonso thought it necessary to oblige the poet to raise the siege. This, however, is no apology for his conduct. He might have forbidden Tasso his court, or banished him from his dominions; but he ought not to have deprived him of his liberty, and endangered his mental health.—The comic muse of Goldoni sports with the pasion of Tasso in his comedy entitled *Torquato Tasso*. And the supposed mistress of the unfortunate poet appears a goddess,—DIA HELIANORA,—in the cloyster of Strawberry-hill. *Descrip. of the villa of Mr. Horace Walpole. Strawberry-hill*, 1784. *p.* 2.

(y) Gasparo Morrola addresses his poem of Iride to Torelli, whom he stiles, "poeta eccellente."

(z) Amongst the Rime of Guarini is a sonnet addressed to this academy on the admission of the author, which concludes with an ingenious quibble on its name.

Nè senza nome *innominato* splende.

SECT. I. plause, and the rest heard with patience. This applause must indeed have been very flattering to the author, as the subject had lost something of its interest from having been recently treated in Il Cresfonte, a juvenile production of Giambattista Liviera; for only three years elapsed between the publication (1588) of the Cresfonte, and the appearance of the Merope in 1591. Besides these tragedies, Torelli published (1596) a treatise entitled Del Debito del Cavalliero, for the use of his son, a knight of Malta, who died while the work was passing through the press. This circumstance is mentioned in an elegant and pathetic dedication to the duke of Parma, to whom Torelli inscribes the work: "non come donato da me," says the weeping father, "ma come cosa sua propria, aggradendo in questo picciol segno la grande, et buona volontà del padre et conservando la memoria del figliuolo."

As we are now about to take leave of the CORO FISSO, or stationary chorus, I shall here pause a moment in order to enquire into the manner in which the Italian tragic chorus was usually conducted and accompanied. But as the historians of the early Italian stage have left this subject wrapt in deep obscurity, it will be necessary to proceed with a cautious step.

1. When Giustiniani's tragedy of Œdipus was represented in the Olympic theatre of Vicenza, the chorus, according to Pigafetta, was formed of fifteen persons who were ranged in two rows of seven each, with the choriphœus, or leader, in

the

the middle. Here our ground is sure, but it soon becomes slippery. In what manner the chorus was ranged on the stage, or how it was conducted, I cannot determine with certainty, says Crescimbeni. Having thus candidly acknowledged his ignorance, he proceeds to conjecture, that as the chorus was borrowed from the Greeks, their manner of conducting it was probably imitated. But being unwilling to leave this point totally undecided, he has recourse, as a dernier ressort, to the stage directions prefixed to the sacred drama dell' Anima e del Corpo, in which the following instructions for the chorus are given. "The chorus is to have a place allotted them on the stage, part sitting and part standing, in sight of the principal characters. And when they sing, they are to rise and be in motion with proper gestures."(a) But whether this custom was universal, adds our modest and indefatigable author, or the invention "di chi ordinò la dette rappresentazione," is not known. Despairing then of being able to throw further light upon this part of my subject, I shall let it remain enveloped in the obscurity in which I found it, and proceed to

SECT. I.

2. The accompaniment of the chorus. This is generally believed to have consisted of music only. M. de Cahusac, speaking of the Italian tragic drama, says, "dans les premiers tems, ils (the Italians) ont pris les sujets des Grecs ont

(a) Sig. Signorelli, in one of the valuable letters with which he favoured me during the progress of this work, observes, that "il disegno che si ebbe nella rappresentazione dell' Anima e del Corpo, fu di mostrare il coro fisso alla greca, il quale sedeva sempre alla vista de' personaggi e dell' uditorio, indi a suo tempo si levava e faceva de' convenevoli movimenti, cantando."

SECT. I. changé la division, et l'ont faite en trois actes. Ils ont retenu leurs chœurs, et ne s'en sont point servis. En conservant la musique, ils ont proscrit la danse."(b) "A similar observation is made by the learned Abate Conti.(c) Highly as I respect those authorities, and willing as I might be to bow to them on any other occasion, I am, I will confess, inclined to think, that though the chorus was usually accompanied with music alone, dancing was not totally proscribed. In support of this position, several proofs might be adduced. May it not be conjectured, that the movements described in the stage directions of the drama Dell' Anima e del Corpo, were regulated by music, the performers moving, as they sung, with a measured step? It is certain that the author directs, that if a dance should be called for at the conclusion, a verse beginning thus, "Chiostri altissimi, e stellati," is to be sung, accompanied sedately and reverentially by the dance. Perhaps too it might be urged, that the concluding chorus of Testi's Alcina was at least intended, by the author, to be accompanied with dancing; for he entitles it Balletto, a word which is defined by the Italian lexicographers, "una spezie di ballo." Nor should we omit to remark, that the marquis Venuti, in his Descrizione dell' antica città d' Ercolano, describes a dance

(b) *Traité histor. de la Danse.* cap. iii. p. 75.
(c) *Prose e Poesie del Abate Conti.* tom. ii. p. 122.

which

which was performed (1621) in Naples during the represen- SECT. I.
tation of the Crispo of Stefonio,(d) Thus my position receives, or seems to receive, support from authorities not less respectable than those who deny the fact for which I contend. If, however, a cloud still seems to rest upon this interesting branch of my subject, I will candidly acknowledge I am not, at present, prepared to make a further attempt at dispelling it.

Nor am I as well prepared as I once flattered myself I should be, to exhibit a specimen of the music to which the tragic chorus was originally sung. A deep enquirer into the history of music whom I consulted is, however, of opinion, that the choral parts of the early Italian tragedies were in the style of the choral church music of the same period, previous to the invention of recitative at the beginning of the last century. Subscribing to the opinion of my friend, I shall substitute

(d) From the description of this dance I am, however, induced to think it was unconnected with the tragedy, and only performed between the acts, like the modern ballet. I shall give the words of my authority. "Una rappresentanza di ballo, imitante i giri del labirinto, fu messa alla publica vista in Napoli nell' anno 1621, con applauso universale, allorchè rappresentossi la tragedia del Crispo composta dallo Stefonio." p. 114. Here we may dimly discern a ballet or dramatic dance, founded on the story of Theseus and Ariadne. It is a curious but a certain fact, that a dance of a similar figure, is frequently performed, at this

SECT. I. substitute for the specimen which eluded my enquiries,

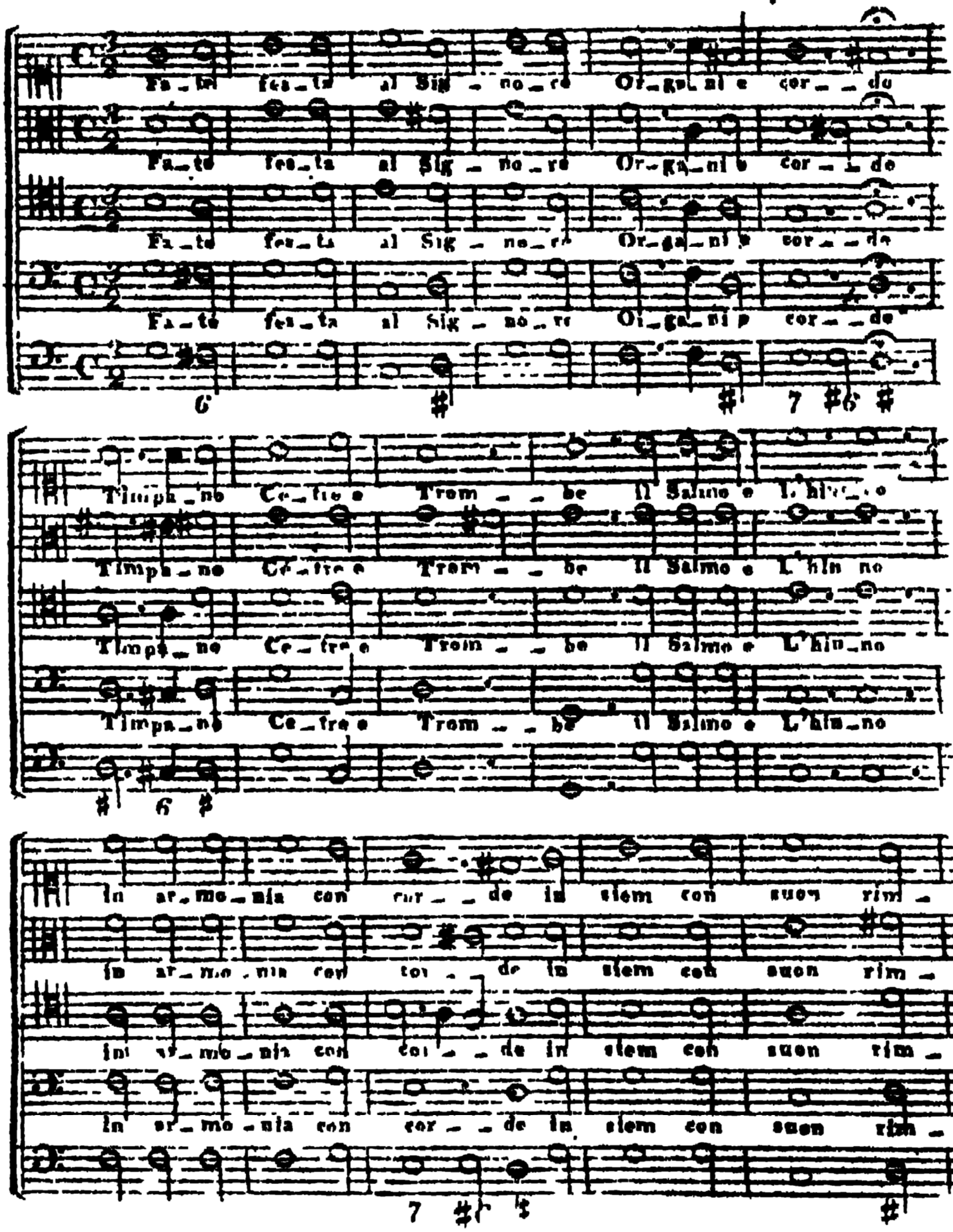
Chorus in the sacred drama dell' Anima e del Corpo.

(See the annexed Plate.)

If this specimen should not gratify the musical reader, i will, I trust, satisfy his curiosity. I shall now observe, in th words of the friend to whom I have just alluded, that "reci tative, long before solo-airs were attempted, was thought b poets and their friends, an admirable invention to get rid o choral compositions in dramatic representations." Hence i may be inferred, that the tragic chorus sunk into disuse i Italy, in proportion as the opera rose into public favour. Per haps too it also received a wound from the refinement o modern music. For, as Mr. Mason very justly observes "our different cadences, our divisions, variations, repetitions without which modern music cannot subsist, are entirely im proper for the expression of poetry."

this day on the shore of the Mediterranean near Naples, by the fishermen and their familie Signora Angelica Kaufman, who had viewed this dance with the eye of a painter skilled i the antique, once observed to me, that she could discover in the gestures of the dancer several of the attitudes which we admire in the paintings found amongst the ruins of Pompe and Herculaneum. Another dance in which several of the attitudes exhibited in thos paintings may be discovered, is described in the Appendix No. VII.—On the subject o the dances, and amusements in general, of the lower orders of the Italians, much curious in formation may be derived from the inestimable dissertations of Anton Maria Salvini, on *L Fiera*, and *La Tancia*, (Ed. 1726. 8L.) the comedies by Michel Buonarruoti, il giovane the Tyrtæus of the comic poets of Italy.

A

Chorus in the Oratorio dell' Anima et di Corpo

bom be Canti ogni lin gua e di ca in siem col suo ne

_bom_be Canti ogni lin_gua e di_ca in siem col suo_ne

_bom_be Canti-ogni lin_gua e di_ca in siem col suo_ne

_bom_be Canti ogni lin_gua e di_ca in siem col suo_ne

13 7 6

Be_ne_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_no Be_ne_

Be_ne_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_no Be_ne

Be_ne_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_no Be_ne_

Be_ne_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_no Be_ne_

13 11 10

_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_ne.

_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_ne.

_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_ne.

_di_te il Sig_nor per che e glie buo_ne.

As an enquiry into the nature and powers of the several musical instruments which sustained and swelled the chorus of the early Italian tragedies, does not properly fall within my plan, I shall refer the reader for information on that subject, to the elaborate works of Padre Martini, Sir J. Hawkins, and Doctor Burney. I shall, however, embrace this opportunity to observe that, of the instruments which prevailed upon the Italian stage at the rise of Italian tragedy, a copious enumeration is given in the Descrizione degl' intermedii rappresentati nelle nozze di don Francesco de' Medici, ed la regina Giovanna d'Austria, subjoined to la Cofanaria di F. d' Ambra, printed in Florence, 1593, by F. Giunti; and in the farsa, or masque, by Sannazaro, which was represented in Naples before Alfonso, duke of Calabria, in 1492, mention is made of the musical instruments employed on that occasion. Amongst the instruments enumerated in Sannazaro's little drama, we find the cornamusa and ribeca both of which have ceased, long since, to be theatrical instruments: the former, however, is still a favourite with the Calabrese, and though the latter has fallen into total disuse, its name is yet remembered in Naples, and applied, in derision, to the violin in the hands of a bad performer. Delineations of the ribeca, and several other musical instruments which prevailed in Italy so early as the year 1524 are exhibited in the frontispiece to the Tempio d' Amore

of

SECT. I. of Galeotto del Carretto, noticed in a former part of this work.

Returning from this digression, I shall close this section with a few general observations on the tragic dramas of the period which we have been considering. "Est-il arrivé," says the author of L'Historie du theatre Italien, "que les tragedies composées, depuis 1500 quesqu'en 1600, ou environ, ont été trouvées en Italie trop cruelles, et n'ont pas fait plaisir; enfin l'horrible poussé à l'excès dégoûta les Italiens d'un tel spectacle. Les poëtes ne furent point contens de faire que les fils tuassent leurs méres, ou les peres leurs enfans, que l'on fit apporter sur la scene des urnes où étoient les membres des enfans massacrés que l'on tiroit de l'urne, piece à piece, pour les faire voir aux spectateurs."(e) The reader will perceive that this observation, though seemingly intended to be general, points obliquely at the Orbeeche and Acripanda. Here I will take occasion to remark, that it was rather from the

(e) *Tom.* i. *p.* 37. In tracing the various revolutions which have occurred, in different countries, in the public taste, our surprise is powerfully excited on observing, that the same nation, which, in the sixteenth century, not only tolerated but probably admired the spectacles so justly reprobated by the historian of the Italian stage, should, in the year 1728, refuse a patient hearing to the Catone in Utica of Metastasio, merely because the hero appears, wounded, in the fifth act. Yet the fact is indisputable. Dr. Burney has preserved the pasquinade which was published on the occasion, [illegible] p. 381. And in the edition of Metastasio's works printed [illegible] scene of the Catone altered, "a riguardo" says the editor, "del gentilissimo sesso Romano."

Roman

Roman than the Greek theatre, that the Italians learned to heighten the horrors of their tragic scenes with reeking spectacles. Murder on the Greek stage was generally committed behind the scenes, sometimes in the hearing, but rarely, I believe, in the presence of the spectators;(*f*) nor was it usually followed by, or attended with, any shocking circumstances: but in the tragedies of Seneca, the audience are supposed to behold Hercules tearing his children in pieces, Medea imbruing her hands in the blood of her son, and Theseus collecting the scattered members of Hippolytus. If, however, we should attempt to trace out the causes which led the Italian tragic writers to select fables in which horror predominates, we must not seek them either in the national religion, or in the national character. The Italians of the sixteenth century did not, like the ancient Greeks and Romans, worship gods whose attributes were rage, revenge and lust,—they adored an all-perfect and all-merciful Being; nor can we discover any thing cruel or ferocious in the cha-

SECT. II.

(*f*) The Greek stage was not, however, always exempt from bloody spectacles. Agave bearing the head of her son Pentheus, must be present to the mind of every reader of Euripides. But the poet seems to offer an excuse for this violation of the common usage of his stage, by making the unhappy mother, in a fit of bacchanalian frenzy, mistake the head of her son for that of a lion.—What an admirable lesson for the votaries of Bacchus!

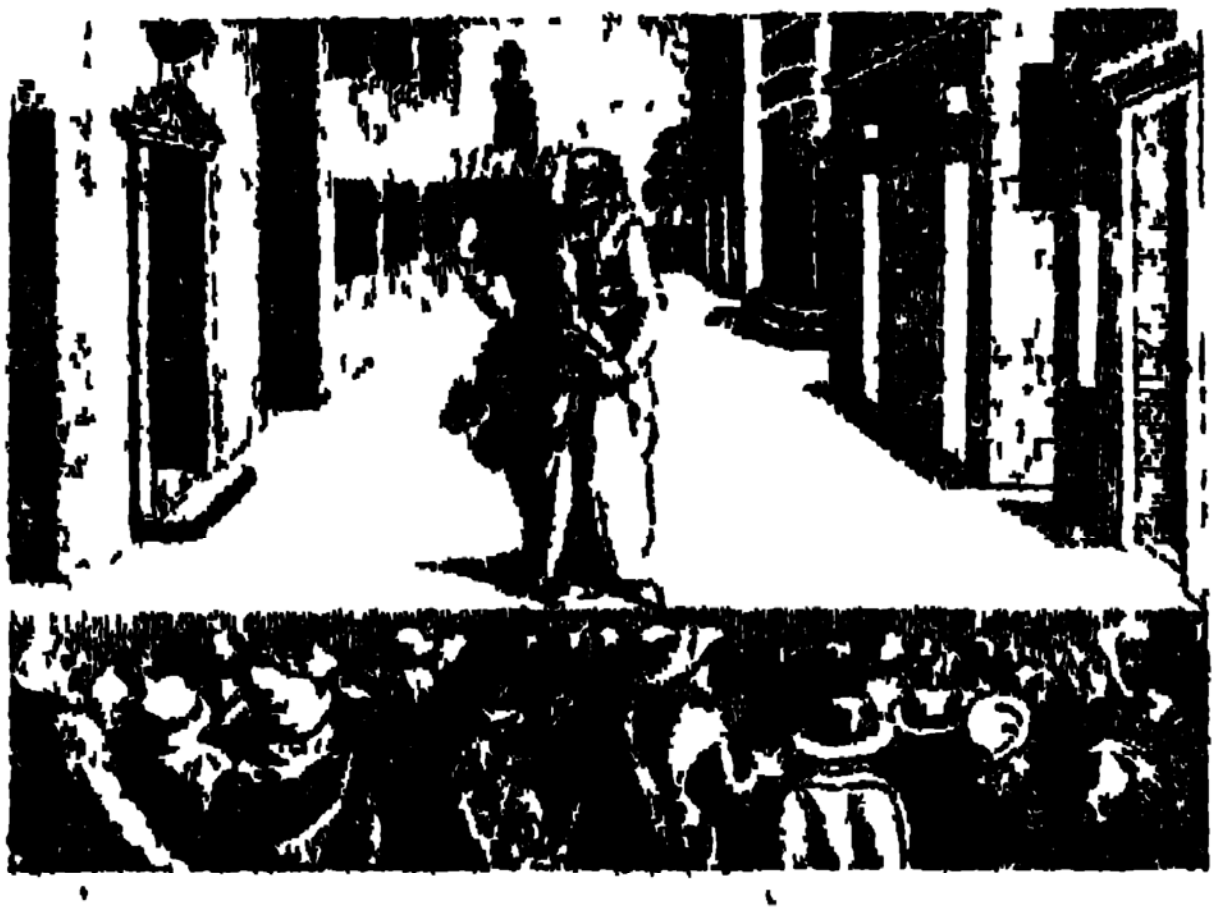
Lord Roscommon, in a note on his translation of Horace's Art of Poetry, endeavours to prove that the Greek tragic writers seldom defiled their stage with blood; but he makes no attempt at defending, or accounting for, their choice of subjects. This remained to be done by Mr. Preston, in his learned and ingenious reflections on the choice of subjects for tragedy among the Greek writers. *Trans. of the Roy. Irish Acad. vol.* vi.

SECT. I racter of the nation, except where the spirit of democracy prevailed. In fact, the Italian dramatists of this period, wrote without any regard to the national character. Enthusiastic admirers of the ancients, they followed them implicitly;(g) and the public taste gradually formed itself to endure, if not to relish, their scenes of complicated horrors.

(g) So strong was the national prejudice in favor of the writings of the ancients in the time of Ariosto, that he was apprehensive his comedy of Cassaria would have been damned as an *original work*.

Senza ascoltarne mezzo o fine.

and therefore he endeavours, in the prologue, to prevail on the audience to hear before they decide.—It will, perhaps, heighten the pleasure which every traveller of taste must feel in visiting the house of Ariosto in Ferrara, to be told, that it was in the apartment at present (1797) adorned with the bust of the poet, that the Cassaria, and all his other comedies were originally recited by the author and his brothers. Of this house, a section and elevation are given in Zatta's elegant edition of the *Orl. Fur.* Ven. 1772. It stands in the Strada di S. Maria di Bocche, and is now the property of the Pellegrina family.



HISTORICAL MEMOIR

ON

ITALIAN TRAGEDY.

SECTION II.

[redacted] DCC.

THE fecundity of the tragic muse is not more remarkable in the age which we are quitting, than in that on which we are now about to enter. But this is not to be wondered at; for still the poets of Italy continued to drink deeply at the well-head of pure poesy [redacted] imbibed, too deeply. Instead of exercising their own reason, (says Gibbon, speaking of this period), the Italians acquiesced in that

SECT. II.

SECT. II. of the ancients: instead of transfusing into their native tongue the taste and spirit of the classics, they copied, with the most awkward servility, the language and ideas suited to an age so different from their own. This observation is severe, but I fear it is too just. However, I trust we shall find, as we proceed, a few writers who do not deserve to be classed with the herd of servile imitators who drew this angry and unqualified censure from the great historian of declining Rome.

I shall open this age with the Tomiri (*b*) of Angelo Ingegneri, a tragedy which, though it does not rank with the first productions of the Italian muse, has many beauties. Oppressed with an heavy weight of moral declamation, the dialogue is often languid; but some of the odes abound in true poetic fire, particularly the address to the sun at the close of the second act, beginning

Alta, e prima cagion di quanto in terra
S' appiglia, e nasce, e l'arricchisce, ed orna.

The departure from history in the contrition of Tomyris heightens the moral tendency of the piece.(*i*) But in her feeble

(*a*) *Nap. appresso Gio. Giac. Carlino, e Const. Vitale, 1607.*

(*i*) In the year 1762, signora Elisa Accarigi of Siena, undertook a tragedy on the interesting story of Tomyris, in which she seems to have followed Ingegneri in the change of character that takes place in her heroine towards the end of the piece. But, instead of being softened by contrition, Tomyris appears full of great, virtuous and magnanimous senti-
ments

feeble expressions of sorrow on hearing of the death of her son, and in the multiplicity of her enquiries at that afflicting moment, we lose sight of the mother,—and, of course, of nature. Perhaps too, the shade of Astyages might have been omitted: it certainly could be spared, for it appears to no useful purpose. SECT. II.

In the declamation of this tragedy, the author endeavours to account for the decline of tragedy in Italy at the time of the appearance of his drama (1607): "sia, perche la spesa, e la

malincon-

SECT. II. malinconia dello spettacolo ne rende poco
_____ re; ò sia più tosto,
soggetti tragici, e la difficoltà de i precetti, dati in
materia da i maestri dell' arte, ne disgustasse i compositori.
In another part of this discourse, he declares, "io non so
d'accordo con coloro che vogliono, che sia morte d' Anfo
tele, che 'l tragico habbia per fine di purgar gli animi, co
mezzo del terrore, e della commiseratione, da quest' istes
affetti. Prima, perche ciò sarebbe un pensare di curare 'l fred
do, co 'l freddo, e 'l caldo co 'l caldo, e non con i contrari, com
fanno i medici: poi perche l'animo, liberato dal timore, e dall
compassione, trapassa sovente all' insolenza, ed alla crudeltà.
Without waiting to enquire whether this dissent from th
opinion of the Stagyrite be either just or ingenious I shal
proceed to observe that, if Ingegneri should be forgotten a
a critic and as a poet, he will ever be remembered with gra
titude as a friend and amanuensis of Tasso. To him w
are indebted for the first correct edition of the Gerusalemm
Liberata; and had he not secretly possessed himself of
copy of Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato, that sublim
poem would probably never have appeared, or have bee
published in a mutilated state. Nor was he wanting in pe
sonal services to Tasso when suffering from mental infirmit
or the persecutions of his enemies. Ingegneri was a man
profound learning, and a successful translator. His transla
tion of the first book of Ovid's Art of Love, is still read w
pleasur

pleasure. but his literary character derives its celebrity from his Discorsi della Poesia rappresentativa He was born in Vicenza, and graced with the academic honors of that city

As I advance several other tragedies offer themselves to my notice; but I do not find my attention arrested until the appearance of the Evandro of Francesco Bracciolini in 16 2, and the Giorgio and Ulisse of Giambattista della Porta of Naples, in 1614. The latter has been compared in point of elegance of style and harmony of numbers, with the Torrismondo and Semiramide, but in the Giorgio the author has been accused of embellishing the fabulous story of the champion of England with beauties stolen from the Iphigenia of Euripides Baretti prefers the comedies of della Porta to his tragedies. Of this author I have only been able to learn, that he sunk under a weight of years in 1615 But my biographical enquiries concerning the author of the Evandro, have been attended with more success

Francesco Bracciolini, a gentleman of Pistoja, was a voluminous writer The number of his writings, says one of his biographers, is incredible. Being a man of elegant manners, profound erudition, and sprightly wit, he became the favourite of Maffeo Barberini who, in 1623, rose to the chair of Saint Peter.(k) When Barberini was sent as nuncio to the court

(k) The character of Urban has been succinctly and energetically drawn by the abbé Deschiroli: "Il aimait les lettres, fit mettre le grand Galilée à l'inquisition, et choisit ses noveax." *Dict. de la gal. roy. de Flor.* p. 116. His latin poetry is praised by the author of

SECT. II.

court of France by Clement VIII. he invited our author t attend him as his secretary. But Bracciolini, soon growing tired of this situation, begged permission to return to his na tive country. This gave offence to the nuncio, and Braccio lini lost his friendship. But when Barberini succeeded Cle ment VIII. the incense of a poem entitled L'Elezione d Urbano VIII. softened his resentment, and our author wa restored to favor. A favourite of the pope, and a favourit of the muses, the fame of Bracciolini spread rapidly, pene trating even the wilds of Scotland. Baretti enumerates thre tragedies by this author, l'Evandro, l'Arpalice and la Pente

of *Letters of Liter.* p. 296. Having been led to notice Urban, I shall devote the remainde of this note to an attempt at rectifying an error concerning this enlightened pontiff, in which some of the biographers and commentators of Milton have fallen. Misled by Si John Hawkins, the late Mr. Warton says, "when Milton was at Rome, he was introduce to the concerts of cardinal Barberini, afterwards pope Urban the Eighth, where he hear Leonora (Baroni) sing, and her mother play." *Poems upon seve. occas. By J. Milton.* Lond 1705. p. 491 *(note.)* A slight enquiry might have undeceived this ingenious writer. Urba was raised to the chair of St. Peter 1623; consequently he was in the sixteenth year his pontificate when Milton visited Rome in 1639. The cardinal to whom our divine bar was introduced, was, probably, Francesco Barberini, one of the nephews of Urban, who, lik his uncle, was not only a lover of music, but an admirer and patron of literary merit, an therefore likely to feel the attractions of such talents as Milton was endowed with. It w under his patronage, Otto Battista Doni wrote his Trattato de' generi e de' modi della Mus ica; and Girolamo Preti, a celebrated lyric poet of Bologna, died in his service. Fulvi Testi addresses to this cardinal a sonnet beginning

Parte il bifronte Dio.

As Doni, Testi and Bracciolini were retainers of the Barberini family when Milton was Rome, they were probably personally known to him. Had he, therefore, left a detailed ac count of his travels, it might be expected to throw much light on a brilliant period in th literary history of modern Italy.

silea

ilea: but the Evandro only has met my observation. In his tragedy I find little to admire. The death of Orontea n Act V. Sc. 6. is certainly admirably described. But the lot is not well conducted, and the dialogue is in general eavy from the immoderate length of some of the speeches n order to shew the author's lyric powers, I shall transcribe he chorus to the third act. SECT. II.

È questa vita umana
Orrida selva, solitaria, e vasta,
Dove chi passa, e riguardar si volta,
Se loco v'è da riposarsi alcuno,
È dolce alleggerir l'aspra fatica.
E ben crede ciascuno,
Dov' ella è più fontana
Esser erba più verde, ombra più folta.
Ma, poiche appressa il peregrino il piede,
Conosce ermo ogni loco
Pur egualmente, e vede,
Che la vista, e il desio gli fanno un gioco,
E che l'incolta inabitata spiaggia
Non ha parte di se fuor che selvaggia.
Giove sentendo un giorno
Le querele de' miseri mortali,
Disse: Ciascun i suoi dolor mi dia:
E di miserie un' ampio monte accolto
Cumulo immenso d'infiniti mali,
E confuso, e ravvolto,

SECT II.

A ciascun' uomo intorno
Egualmente la somma indi partita,
Allor grida la turba, e si contenta
Più del suo mal primiero,
E che l'angc, e tormenta,
Quanto novello or più, tanto più fero.
Così nessun, della sua sorte pago,
Pur dell' altrui, benchè peggiore, è vago.

This tragedy, according to Baretti, appeared for the firs time in Florence, from the press of the Giunti, 1613.(*l*) After a long sleep, it again met the public eye in Scelta d rare e celebri tragedie, published in Venice in 1750. The Amoroso Sdegno of Bracciolini, has raised him to eminenc amongst the pastoral poets of Italy; and his mock-heroi poem of Lo Scherno degli Dei,(*m*) is a monument of his wi and humour: but La Croce Racquistata has acquired him n epic glory. La tête epique is a rare endowment.—Our au thor died in 1640.

(*l*) *Ital. Lib. p. 97.* Baretti's authority on this, as well as on many other occasions, i questionable. I am possessed of a copy of the Evandro, published in Florence, 1613, *c presso G. e Bar. Giunti*, which is said, in the title-page, to be the "seconda edizione." Per haps this play first appeared in Pistoia, whence the dedication is dated; "di Pistoia alli 2 di Febraio, 1612."

(*m*) *Roma*, 1626. As fourteen cantos of this poem were published (1618) before the pres imparted La Secchia Rapita, the invention of the heroi-comic poem first been ascribed t Bracciolini. This point, which still remains undetermined, is ably discussed in the prefac to the edition of La Secchia Rapita printed at *Modena*, 1744.

Dell

Della Porta and Bracciolini were followed by Ansaldo Ce- SECT. II.
ba, a nobleman of Genoa, who published in 1629 two trage-
dies—the Silandra and the Alcippo, and left inedited le Ge-
melle capovane. Sig. Signorelli disputes the right of the
latter to a place in the Teatro Italiano, and supports his
opinion by an analysis of the piece, in which he exposes all
its feeble parts;—an exhibition of the following passage
alone would, however, have sufficed. It is the language of
Billingsgate. or Saint Giles.

Pir. Mentre so ch'Anniballe in me rivolto
Non degna pur di rimirarti in viso
Tras. Come non degna? Fi parla meco ognora,
E ride, e scherza, e non mi guarda in viso?
Pir. Io so quel che vo' dir; la cortesia
Lo strigne teco, e meco il lega amore.
Tras. Oh come sciocca sei, se tu tel credi!
Pir. Oh come stolta tu, se no 'l comprendi!
Tras. Le pugna a mano a man, se tu non taci,
Mi serviran per lingua e per favella.
Pir. E l'unghie, se tu segui a provocarmi,
Ti suppliran per motti e per risposte.

This play has a chorus which appears at the end of each act. It is composed of Capuans of different factions who sing alternately in anacreontic measure. As this is a singular circumstance in dramatic history, I shall transcribe two stanzas from the first chorus

CAPOVANI.

della fazion Romana.

Deh che spirto a' nostri danni
Si levò dal lago Averno,
E, battendo in aria i vanni
Venne a noi dal cieco inferno,
Perchè, contro a quel che scrisse
Capoa Roma già tradisse?

CAPOVANI.

della parte Cartaginese.

Fur più grandi i nostri danni,
Quando già dal lago Averno
Sospendendo in aria i vanni,
Spirto uscì dal cieco inferno,
Perch' in quel che Capoa scrisse,
Roma no, ma se tradisse.

Concerning Cebà I have learned little more than that he was born in Genoa in 1565, and died in 1623. Besides the tragedies which we have already mentioned, he wrote a treatise on epic poety, two poems entitled L'Ester, and il Furio Camillo, and translated from the Greek, the characters of Theophrastus. These productions were all printed in the life time of the author; but so extremely careless was he of the Gemelle Capouane, the stay of his literary reputation, that it was only brought to light by a fortunate accident, after his death.

" Un

r Un jour," says Riccoboni " je trouvai cette tragedie: le nom de l'auteur n'y étoit point, mais à la premiere page il y avoit huit vers que l'auteur adressoit à un de ses amis. Ces huit vers étoient si beaux qu'ils me donnerent envie de lire la tragedie: je la trouvai bonne, et il me sembloit au papier et à l'ecriture que c'etoit l'original même de l'auteur; je n'avois aucune connoissance de cette tragedie, et je ne pouvois pas en découvrir l'auteur; je la fis voir à monsieur le marquis Maffei. Il la reconnut d'abord." Delighted at getting this treasure, the marquis could not be prevailed on to restore it to Riccoboni; but he promised not to withhold it from the public. And in observance of this promise, he inserted it in the second volume of the Theatro Italiano. But it is to be lamented that the preliminary lines which struck the fancy of Riccoboni so forcibly, are omitted.

A few tragedies by different authors appeared about the same time with those of Ceba; but none of them are deemed deserving of notice, except the Erminia of Gabriello Chiabrera, and the Carichia of Pignatelli. The latter is composed of materials drawn from the beautiful Greek romance of Chariclea and Theagenes; and the former, according to an excellent Italian critic, is not inferior to any preceding tragic drama in the Italian language "per regolarità, per economia, et per maneggio d'affetti."

Of Pignatelli I only know that he was born in Naples of the illustrious family which gave Innocent XII. to the see of

Rome.

SECT. II. Rome. But of Chiabrera, Baretti thus speaks: "Gabriell Chiabrera attempted in his earlier youth to obtain the epi laurel, but perceiving that his countrymen could not be brough to bestow any great encomiums on his Amadeide, turned hi steps to the lyric track, and abandoning the road traced som centuries before by Petrarch and his followers, took Pinda and Anacreon for his models, and acquired much reputa tion both with his fervid and his soft measures." Chiabrer may be numbered with those writers who, by laying th ancients under contribution, have enriched the lyric poetry of their country. "La lirica poesia italiana," says Tassoni "non è altro, che una mirabil mescolanza di tutte le bellezz poetiche, che non pur sono sparse in diverse lingue."

About this time lived a Sicilian jesuit named Ottenzio Sca macca, who published, between the years 1632 and 1651 forty nine tragic dramas on sacred and profane subjects "Quant à celles dont les sujets sont prophanes," says Ricco boni, "comme le Polipheme, Roland furieux &c. le pere Sca macca les appelle toûjours Morales, sans doute parce que so intention dans ses pieces a toûjours été de corriger le mœurs.

Bernardino Stefonio, another Jesuit who flourished at thi time, published three latin tragedies of which one (la sant Sinforosa (o) is much extolled. This tragedy was first repre

ente

(o) Gian Vittoria Rossi, a Roman gentleman, at the request of Stefonio undertook th character of Sinforosa which he performed to such general satisfaction, that he bore

ented in the Jesuits' college in Rome, where, as well as in SECT
he other Roman colleges, but particularly in those of that II.
seful but dangerous order, it was customary, according to
Denina, to perform tragedies for the exercise and entertain-
ment of their pupils (p). And it was probably with this view
hat all the tragedies which we have just mentioned, were
written.

onsiderable time after, the name of Sinforosa. It is recorded as an extraordinary instance
f the retentive power of memory, that though seven hundred lines fell to the share of Rossi,
e was perfectly prepared in his part in the course of three days.

(p) Crescimbeni celebrates the theatrical powers of Carlo Emanuello d'Este, son of the Mar-
uis of san Cosimo, who, in his fifteenth year, took a principal part in an intermede between
he acts of an Italian translation of the Andromache of Corneille, performed in the Clementine col-
ege of Rome. "La maraviglia di questo fatto," says this laborious writer, "ritornò in parec-
hi amadori di poesia, che vi ebbe presenti, la memoria degli eroi di quella nobilissima casa,
anto benemerita de' poeti: e particolarmente vi ricordarono del famoso Rinaldo, ed celebre
ella spedizione di Terra santa sotto Goffredo." *Istor.* i. *p.* 457. I shall beg leave to enrich
his note with a passage in point, from the letter of an ingenious friend whom I consulted
during the progress of this work. "I have been frequently delighted by theatrical represen-
ations, in the college of Rome, particularly at the Nazarene and Germanic colleges, and the
Collegio Clementino, where the actors who performed at the public theatres, excited in my
nind the emotions which the sacred dramas of Metastasio and Racine are calculated to pro-
luce; giving grief, pity, remorse, &c. their proper tone and variation of feature, with a ges-
ure and attitude particularly expressive and affecting. The only difference I observed at the
colleges was, that love intrigues were never introduced. In every other respect they resem-
bled the public theatre of the valle, alibert, argentina and capranica. The first of those re-
presentations I ever attended in Rome was Metastasio's Giuseppe riconosciuto. The players
declaimed accompanied by music, and the chorus was supported by the accompaniments of a
grand orchestra, which ravished the minds of the audience, and melted their affections with
such despotism that Joseph II. Emperor of Germany, who was present with some of the first
nobility, was observed to burst into tears when Joseph discovered himself to his brethren.
This was at the German college. At the other public colleges we had the Opera Buffa and
some of Goldoni's comedies, as well as sacred dramas. Both comedies and tragedies were
performed by the collegians."

But

SECT. II. But the Jesuits were not the only ecclesiastics who were indulged with a private theatre. The muses were not ba nished with the mysteries and moralities from the pale o the church. It was usual in Italy, during the middle ages and the practice still continues, to relieve the tœdium of the ascetic life with dramas on sacred, and even on profane sub jects, which were performed by such members of the frater nity as had talents or inclination for theatrical exhibition Giovanni Battista Doni, while he supports my assertion speaks rather disrespectfully indeed of the legendary kind o dramas used in convents, calling them "gross and vulgar." From this censure, however, must be excepted san Giovann e san Paolo by Lorenzo de' Medici, and the santa Domitilla and santa Guglielma of Antonia, wife of Bernardo Pulci;(p*) as well as the effusions of other polished pens occasionally exercised in the service of the cloister, particularly the Anti gone of Conte di Monte, which was performed (1565) in a little wooden theatre designed by Palladio and painted by Zucchero, in the church of san Maria della carità in Venice Amongst the dramas which fell under the lash of Doni L' Eunuco della regina Candace di Ambrogio Grigioni was probably one. In this rappresentazione, which was recited in the church of san Quirico on the first of May 1519, "..ou

(p*) See biographical notices of the Pulci family prefixed to the valuable edition of the *Morgante Maggiore*, Fir. 1732. and *Burney's Hist. of Music*, vol. iv. p. 82. [REV.] Bernardo is also said to have occasionally exercised himself in the composition of sacred dramas. *Istor. della volg. poes.* vol. 1. *lib.* 4. *cap.* 13.

trouve," says Riccoboni, "avec un ange, saint Philippe et saint Jacques, des paisans et un parasite qui disent mille boufonneries."(q) The more delicate, or rather less gross wit of Plautus(q*) was also relished by the holy fathers. This secret is betrayed by the title-page of an anonymous translation of the Asinaria of Plautus, registered in a catalogue of Italian comedies now lying before me. "Asinaria di Plauto. Tradotto in terza rima da incerto, e rappresentata nel monastero di S. Stefano in Venezia. 1528." The Antiquario and the Fanciulla maritata senza dote, two inedited comedies by Padre Giovanni Antonio Bianchi, which were first represented in the convent of the minor observantines of Orvieto were, we may suppose, better calculated

(q) "I remember that once, at the capuchin convent in Rome," says the correspondent whom I have quoted in the preceding note, "they had a piece of buffoonery which was calculated merely to please themselves, with insipid reflections on their uncouth dress, beards and snuffling pronounciation." This "piece of buffoonery" will probably remind the reader of La Fete de Fous, celebraced at Christmas, during the middle ages, by the ministers of the collegiate churches of France. Vide *Warton's Hist. of Eng. Poet. vol. i. sect. 6.*

(q*) If Terence, whose humour is infinitely more delicate than that of Plautus, often shocks "ears polite," how unfit must the productions of the latter be for a monastic theatre! "Terence," says a French critic, "fait rire au dedans, et Plaute au dehors." But, though neither the Italian clergy, nor laity of the sixteenth century, were remarkable for depravity of manners or morals, yet all the grossness of the ancient theatres of Greece and Rome prevailed on the comic stage of Italy during that period. To be convinced of the truth of this assertion, it will only be necessary to cast a rapid glance through the comedies of Machiavelli, D'Ambra and some of their contemporaries. And should any of my readers feel inclined to censure the monks of S. Stefano for suffering the profane and indelicate writings of Plautus to enter their holy walls, let them turn to *a. 6. sc.* ii. of the Mandragola, and recollect, that Leo X. erected a magnificent theatre for the representation of that comedy, and honored the performance with his presence.

SECT. II.

for the place of representation. That they were favourably received, I learn from a letter with which Signor Signorelli indulged me. This letter, as well as the Storia de' Teatri by the same learned writer, informs me, that twelve tragedies published in 1761 by Bianchi, were represented on the same stage. I shall transcribe the passage. "Nel convento de' minori osservanti di Orvieto recitarono con gran concorso e plauso le dodici tragedie stampate e le due commedie inedite del P. Antonio Bianchi."

Nor were the Italian nuns denied this elegant indulgence. I once conversed with an Italian bathing-man who assured me (and I had no reason to doubt the veracity) he had borrowed from the wardrobe of a public theatre in a small town on the confines of the kingdom of Naples, stage dresses for the nuns of a neighbouring convent; but as the door was barred against his sex, he could afford me no information respecting the representation for which those dresses were procured. Neither have I met with any dramas, like the Athalie and Esther of Racine, professedly written for female religious houses. But Signor Signorelli informs me, that at the request of a lady who lately presided in a nunnery in Naples, he furnished some dramas for the private amusement of her "colombes timides." Amongst these were la Zaira et il Prodigo in America; the latter written by Signor Signorelli himself; the former a translation or imitation of Voltaire's Zayre, a tragedy in which, says the author, "j'aye osé m'aban-

n'abandonner à toute la sensibilitè de mon coeur." It is SECT
not my business to enquire here whether a girl covered with II.
he roses of youth and breathing love, may safely follow a
oet through all the intricate windings of the passions, meet-
ng occasionally the embrace of a feigned lover in private re-
earsal or public representation. But this we certainly
know, that the nuns of Venice abusing, at length, the indul-
gence granted them,(q**) were prohibited the exercise of
heir theatrical talents, and only allowed to exhibit their per-
ons in the orchestra during the inactive performance of an
oratorio. "A Venezia furono pur proibiti," says the Abate
Conti "i drami sacri per l' indecenza della rappresentazione
delle maschere, che talora vi si frammischiavano, e non res-
arono che gli oratorj in musica, che in lingua latina si canta-
o ogni anno negli ospitali"(r)

But to return: one of the most interesting tragedies of
he period under consideration, is the Solimano of Count

(q**) Addison speaks of the theatrical amusements and licentious manners of the Venetian nuns at the time (1701) he visited Venice. "The Venetians," says he, "generally thrust the females of their families into convents, the better to preserve their estates. This makes the Venetian nuns famous for the liberties they allow themselves. They have operas within their own walls, and often go out of their bounds to meet their admirers, or they are very much misrepresented. They have many of them their lovers, that converse with them daily at the grate, and are very free to admit a visit from a stranger." p. 72.

(r) *Prose e Poesie, tom.* i. *pref.* I was present at the performance of one of those oratorios in the ospitale de' mendicanti in Venice. The subject was the miraculous story of Jonas. The unfortunate prophet was heard to speak, in a smothered voice, and in modulated tones, from the whale's belly, while the instrumental accompanyments imitated the rolling of the waves. Mrs. Piozzi also assisted at the performance of an oratorio in this hospital, or rather conservatory. Vide *Observ. in a Journ. thro' Italy, Dub. p.* 123.

SECT. II. Prospero Bonarelli of Ancona. The picture of Turkish man-
ners in this tragedy is allowed to be drawn with great truth
the style is praised for its elegance and brilliancy; and the
catastrophe is artfully concealed during the progress of the
fable, and, at length probably produced. Apostolo Zeno
speaking of this tragedy says, the style is "nobile, corrente
tiene assai del lirico, ed è meno studiato e faticato di quello
dell' Aristodemo del Dottori." The Solimano was first
printed in Florence in 1620,(s) and dedicated to Cosmo II
Grand Duke of Tuscany. In 1697 a French translation of this
tragedy by d'Alibras appeared in Paris. And in 1746 the ori-
ginal work was republished in the Teatro Italiano. The author
flatters himself in his dedication, that his subject gives his
drama a claim to the protection of Cosmo, because, being
covered with Turkish blood, he ought naturally to feel an
interest in the misfortunes of the Ottoman empire. It does
not appear whether the Grand Duke coincided in opinion
with the author.

(s) "This edition," says Baretti, "is much valued, because of the cuts, by Giacomo Calotti. In 1658 another edition was published in Cesena, (per il Neri), to which are prefixed a poetical epistle to the author by Gio. Battista Strozzi, and several adulatory sonnets, among which are two by Ottavio Rinuccini and Gabriello Chiabrera. The sonnet by the latter begins thus:

Questo gentil, che con leggiadri canti
Oscura in paragon cigni, e sirene,
Oggi in teatri, e sù dorate scene
Condanna Turchi a miserabil pianti.

Prospero

Prospero Bonarelli was descended from a long line of SECT
rich and noble ancestors. In 1480 his family received from 14.
Sixtus IV the investiture of the feudatories of Bompiano and the Torrette upon the shore of the Adriatic; and his father was created Marquis of Orciano by Guidubaldo II. Duke of Urbino. Opulent in mental endowments, and devoted to letters, his various productions in prose and verse, have raised him to great literary eminence. Too liberal to submit to the shackles of prejudice, he was one of the first tragic writers of his country who dared to depart so far from the Greek model, as to reject the chorus He thought that music ill accords with the wailings of the tragic muse,(*t*) and therefore his Solimano, as Signorelli observes, "non ha coro di veruna sorte." Bonarelli died at an advanced age under the pontificate of Alexander VII. who not only administered spiritual comfort to the expiring bard, but sent him, says one of his biographers, "un balsamo vitale di preservarlo dagli spessi avvenimenti che lo assalivano." Genius seems to have prevailed in the family of our author. his ancestors signalized themselves as well in letters as in arms;(*u*) and his brother Gui-

(*t*) "Ma con tutto questo pur si trovano tragedie prive del coro cantante, essendovi fra le altre il Solimano del Bonarelli, il quale ebbe opinione, che non punto si convenisse alla tragedie di mesto fine." *Ist. della volg. poes. tom.* 1. *p.* 311. Voltaire entertained the same opinion. See *Melang. de litt. histor. et poet. Gen.* 1756. *p.* 35.

(*u*) See a modest dedication prefixed to the first volume of *Le Rime di diversi nobil. poeti Toscani, raccolte da M. D. Atanag. Ven.* 1565. The second volume of the copy of this scarce and valuable work which I am so fortunate as to possess, belonged to Raffael Gualtieri, six of whose sonnets enrich the first volume,

dubaldo,

ACT. II. dubaldo, wrote the celebrated pastoral drama of Filli d Sciro.(v)

As I observe Bonarelli associating with Rinuccini, Chia brera, Bracciolini and other dramatic writers in the cele brated ACCADEMIA DEGLI UMORISTI, I shall take this occasion to dilate a little upon a society to which the Ita lian drama has many obligations. About the year 1600 some beaux esprits, who assisted at the marriage of Paol Lucio Mancini, a Roman gentleman, exercised their wit, i the course of the evening, in composing sonnets and epi

(v) This dramatic pastoral was, I believe, first represented at Sassuolo, the rural retreat o Dukes of Modena. This palace, which, during a long series of years, was the favouri haunt of the muses, and the scene of several dramatic representations, stands on the Secchia, the distance of three leagues from Modena. It was once a castle of considerable strength, bu the hand of time has softened all its military features, and the pencils of Pibiena and Boulang have been employed to decorate its spacious apartments. Its situation is thus described b Tassoni, who, in the society of his friend Testi, had often indulged in the delicious enjoy ment of its pastoral beauties and excellent wines.

Ma dove lascio di Sassuolo il seno,
Che suol de l' ave far nettare a Giove:
Là dove è il dì più bello e più lucente,
Là dove il ciel tutte le grazie piove:
Quella terra d' amor, di gloria ardente,
Madre di ciò, ch' è più pregiato altrove,
Mandò &c. *La Secchia rapita, can.* iii. st. 47.

As the drama which gave birth to this note, and insensibly led me to the embowering shades of Sassuolo, does not immediately fall within my plan, I shall not dwell further upon it: but I cannot dismiss it without expressing my regret at not being able to procure a copy of the author's Difesa del doppio amore of his heroine Celia, a nymph who equally enamoured of Amintas and Nisus, is driven almost to madness by the violence of her double passion, and resolves, in a long soliloquy, (*Atto* iii. *s.* 1.) on suicide. It is for my fair readers, not for me, to judge whether or not the author has followed nature upon this occasion.

grammatic

grammatic verses, on the ladies who were present. Pleased with this amusement, Mancini, a man of learning and of taste, invited his guests to a further exercise of their talents. Regular meetings were now established, and the plan of amusement extended. Though the hasty ebullitions of wit were not suppressed or discouraged, the members, says Muratori, chiefly devoted themselves to the composition and recital of beautiful and ingenious ("vaghe ed ingegnose") comedies.(v*) At these "merry meetings," all the principal nobility and gentry of Rome attended. The fame of the academy spread, and the associates were universally denominated "i begli umori." This name was afterwards changed into that of Umoristi or Humorists, on the theatrical exhibitions giving place to the recitations of poetical compositions on various subjects. The sala, or spacious apartment in which these meetings were held, still existed in the time of Muratori, decorated with the arms of the principal members. Tassoni, a distinguished associate, thus immortalises this academy in the eleventh canto of his Secchia Rapita:

Spedì il corriere a Gaspar Salviani
Decan de l' accademia de' Mancini.

Having dispatched i begli umoristi, respect for the divine bard who undertook to "justify the ways of God to men,"

(v*) *Vita di Tassoni* prefixed to the 2nd ed. of *La Secch. rap. ined.* 1744.

induces

SECT. II. induces me to notice in this place, two tragedies of inferio merit, to which it is supposed he was indebted.

Gio. Batista Andreini, a strolling player who was born i Florence in 1578, published at Milan in 1613,(*w*) a rappresen tatione entitled Adamo. From this "spirited though irregula and fantastic composition," it is the opinion of Mr. Hayle that the fancy of Milton caught fire.(*x*) Therefore this ele gant biographer and able vindicator of the injured memory of our great epic poet, has not only done Andreini the hono to analyze his drama, but to translate with spirit, elegance and fidelity, some of its most brilliant passages. In one o these, the course of a river is described with a richness o fancy and a "dance of words," that prove Andreini to have been endowed with no common poetic powers. Mr. Hayley will, I hope, pardon the liberty I am about to take in in-

(*w*) *Ad instanza di Geronimo Bordone, libraro.* A copy of this Italian rarity, and the Flo rinda of the same author, are in the noble collection of the Earl of Charlemont. And through the friendship of Prince Giacomo Giustiniani, the accomplished governor of Peru gia, I am now in possession of a small edition of the Adamo, published in *Perugia*, 1641, *pe il Bartoli*, with a dedication, by the author, to Cardinal Spada, dated *Perugia li* 25. *April* 1640. The frontispiece exhibits a view of the garden of Eden.—Eve, instigated by the serpent, offers the fatal apple to Adam, who declines it, and points to heaven,—birds and beasts appear in the back-ground. Subjoined to the drama are, "Ordine per rap presentare con grandissima facilità l'Adamo." Besides the edition just described, and two at Milan (1613 *and* 1617) another appeared in *Modena*, 1683, 12*mo*. Yet this drama wa so little known in England a few years since, that its existence is denied by Mr. Mickle, the admirable translator of The Lusiad: indeed he even seems to coincide in opinion with some Italian literati who declared, that "no such author as Andreini was known in Italy." See *Diss. on the Lusiad*. p. 323. *Dub.* 1791. *(note.)*

(*x*) *Life of Milton*, 2*nd ed. Lond.* 1796. *p.* 257.

lulging the English reader with his exquisite translation of the passage to which I allude. SECT. II.

Eva, se' l venir meco,
Hor t' agrada, mostrarti amica, intendo
Cosa non più veduta;
Cosa sì vaga, che per maraviglia
Inarcherai le ciglia;
Mira, sposa gentile, in quella parte
Di cosi folta, e verdeggiante selva
Dov' ogni angel s'inselva
In dove appunto quelle due sì bianche
Colombe vanno con aperto volo;
Ivi appunto vedrai (o maraviglia)
Sorger tra molli fiori
Un vivo humore, il qual con torto passo
Si frettoloso fugge
E fuggenda t' alletta,
Ch' è forza dir; ferma bel rivo, aspetta;
Quindi vago in seguirlo
Tu pur il segui; ed ei come s' havesse
Brama di scherzar teco,
Fra mille occulte vie depinte, herbose
Anzi note a lui sol celato fugge:
Poscia quand' egli ascolta,
Che tu t' affligi, perche l' hai smarrito
Alza la chioma acquosa, e par che dica
A gorgogliar d' un riso,

ACT. II.

Segui pur segui, il molle passo mio.
Che se godi di mi, con te scherz' io;
Così con dolce inganno alfin ti guida
Sin a l' estrema cima
D' un praticel fiorito, ed egli allhora,
Con veloce dimora,
Dice; rimanti; addio, già, già, ti lascio
Poi si dirupa al basso
Ne seguirlo potendo humane piante
Forz' è che l' occhio il segua; e la tu miri
Come gran copia d' acque in cerchio angusto
Accoglie in cupa, e fruttuosa valle
D' allor cinta, e d' ulive,
Di cipressi; d' aranci, e d' alti pini;
Il qual limpido humore, a i rai del sole,
Sembra un puro cristallo:
Quind' è che nel bel fondo
Nel cristallino de l' onda
Tralucer miri ricca arena d' oro
Ed un mobile argento
Di cento pesci, e cento:
Qui con note canore,
Candidi cigni a la bel onda intorno;
Fanno dolce soggiorno
E sembran gorgheggiando a l' aura dire
Qui fermi il pie chi brama à pien gioire.(x)

(x) This beautiful description is considerably amplified in the edition of the Adamo published at *Perugia*, 1641. As this edition is even more rare than that of *Milan*, 1613, I shall give the whole passage in the *Append.* See No. IX.

Eve

SECT. M

Eve, if to walk with me
It now may please thee, I will shew thee, love,
A sight thou hast not seen,
A sight so lovely, that in wonder thou
Will arch thy graceful brow;
Look thou, my gentle bride, towards that path
Of this so intricate and verdant grove,
Where sit the buds embower'd;
Just there, where now, with soft and snowy plumes,
Two social doves have spread their wings for flight;
Just there thou shalt behold (O pleasing wonder!)
Springing amid the flow'rs,
A living stream, that with a winding course
Flies rapidly away,
And as it flies allures,
And tempts you to exclaim, sweet river, stay,
Hence, eager in pursuit,
You follow, and the stream, as if it had
Desire to sport with you,
Thro' many a floral, many a glassy way,
Well known to him, in soft concealment flies,
But when at length he hears
You are afflicted to have lost his sight,
He rears his watry locks, and seems to say,
Gay with a gurgling smile,
Follow, ah follow still my placid course,
If thou art pleased with me, with thee I sport;
And thus, with sweet deceit, he leads you on

To the extremest bound
Of a fair flow'ry meadow, then at once,
With quick impediment,
Says, stop, adieu, for now, yes, now I leave you,
Then down a rock descends;
There, as no human foot can follow farther,
The eye alone must follow him, and there,
In little space, you see a mass of water
Collected in a deep and fruitful vale,
With laurel crowned and olive,
With cypress, oranges, and lofty pines;
The limpid water in the sun's bright ray
A perfect crystal seems;
Hence in its deep recess,
In the translucent wave
You see a precious glittering sand of gold,
And bright as moving silver
Innumerable fish;
Here with melodious notes
The snowy swans upon the shining streams.
Form their sweet residence,
And seem in warbling to the wind to say,
Here let those rest who wish for perfect joy.

HAYLEY

I shall now present the reader with the delineation of an archangel by the hand of our author.

O tú, che forse di rubin celeste
Vesti lorica ardente,
Forte archangelo sacro
Guerrier forte, e pietoso, e l' aureo crine,
Ti copre de be' raggi, elmo lucente
Con la destra vibrando asta vittrice,
E con la manca man libra aurea ergendo
Chiudi le ricche d'or dipinte piume,
E volgi mite il guardo
A chi prostato al suol t' onora, e cole.

O thou that seemst with rubies of the sky,
To deck thy radiant mail,
Prime of the dazzling bands on high,
Celestial warrior, hail!

A crest of floating gold thy helm adorns,
The beam of conquest in thy right hand burns.
Thy left Astrea's scales obey,
And, in mid air suspended, play.
O close thy plumes, and look benignant down
On us that here below thine awful presence own.

If the colours of Andreini were not "dipp'd in heaven," they are, however, unquestionably glowing, and can only suffer a diminution of lustre, by being contrasted with those of Milton. In both poets we find plumes sprinkled with gold, and a warlike, or regal ornament confining the flowing ringlets of the hair. But in the angels of Milton we seem to behold

SECT. II. behold some of those beautiful forms which encircle the throne of the Almighty. (a)

The edition of the drama under consideration, which was printed at Milan in 1613, is entitled, Sacra Rappresentatione and dedicated to Mary de' Medici, (b) in whose train the author travelled into France. Each scene is embellished with an head piece "esprimente al vivo gli affetti, e le cose si contengono in essa." Carlo Antonio Procaccino, we are told "fece le figure, ed honorò doppiamente l' autore co' l suo ritratto, eternando se stesso, se non l' opera, che poco merita ed uccidendo la morte con lo strale finissimo del suo pen nello."

From an ample life of Andreini by count Mazzuchelli, it appears, that he was a prolific writer. (c) The learned coun

(a) It is the opinion of Mr. Hayley that the various effusions of the pencil which Milton received in Italy, served to enrich his fancy. *Life of Milton*, p. 263. This conjecture is equally ingenious and well-founded. Several of the immortal works of Guido, Raffael and Michael Angelo may be traced in the Paradise Lost;—I will instance the sublime description of the creation in the third book, (line 708, 719) which seems to have been copied from the same subject, as treated by Raffaello, in the gallery of the Vatican, called "Il Trionfo di Raffaello." It may indeed be said of Milton, without exaggeration, that he returned from his travels

fraught
With all that France knew and taught;
With all that Buonarotti dar'd;
With all of heaven that Raffaelle shar'd;
With Guido's grace, and Rosa's fire, &c.

Boyd.

(b) As this dedication throws some light on the history of the life and writings of Andreini, it is given in the *Appendix*, *No.* VIII.

(c) Andreini has been denominated, in contempt, a stroller. But it should be remembered that in his time there was no permanent public theatre in Italy, and that consequently a player

count gives a list of thirty of his various productions, which SECT. II.
form, as Mr. Hayley observes, a singular medley of comedies
and devout poems. Of these productions I have only seen the
Adamo (which we have already noticed) and the Florinda,
printed at Milan in 1606. (*d*) The scene of the latter is laid
in Scotland, and the story drawn from the annals of that
country. A chorus composed of Scottish nymphs (ninfe
scottese) fills up the intervals between the acts with odes à la
greeque, but without the fire of their model. One of the rude
engravings which embellish this work, is a portrait of the
author. (*e*) And amongst the little adulatory poems pre-
fixed to it, is one addressed to the wife of Andreini, who, like
his mother, was an admired actress; (*f*) but whether she

in order to live, must stroll. However the term istrione, or stroller, is not such an opprobrious appellation with the Italians, as with us: some of their best performers bear, at this day, that denomination.—The learned reader need not be told that the term istrione is derived from the Tuscan word hister. Hence histriones. Rome owes its stage to Tuscany. On occasion of a pestilence, (A. U. 390) the Romans were admonished to avert the anger of the gods by plays; and actors were then first brought from Etruria to Rome.

(*d*) In the title-page Andreini styles himself "Comico fedele."

(*e*) A faithful copy of his portrait is placed at the head of this section.

(*f*) The mother of Andreini, says Mr. Hayley, "was an actress highly celebrated for the excellence of her talents, and the purity of her life; she appeared also as an authoress, and printed a volume of letters and essays, to which two great poets of her country, Tasso and Marini, contributed each a sonnet. Her memory was celebrated by her son, who published, at her death, a collection of poems in her praise." *Life of Milton*, p. 263. Her several productions were published under the name of Isabella Andreini, Comica Gelosa. Her Mirtilla first appeared in *Verona*, 1588; and in 1601, a collection of her Rime was published in *Milan*. She died in 1604.—Francesco Andreini, the father of our author, was also a player and a writer. He was called Capitano Spavento, from the excellence of his performance in that character. And when the works of his friend and fellow-comedian, Flaminio Scala, were collected for publication, he contributed the preface.

know,

SECT. II.

knew, like her "accompagnare ad un' arte riputata universal mente pericolosa" says Crescimbeni, "per l' onore delle donne; una somma castità, e un costume innocentissimo," is no recorded.—Let us now attend to "a brother of the craft while he draws the literary character of our author. "Outre les tragi-comedies Espagnoles," says Riccoboni, "nos comediens Italiens donnerent quelques comedies écrites, et Gio Battista Andreini detto Lelio en composa lui seul au nombre de dix-huit, selon le recueil de la Dramaturgia del' Allacci je ne les ai pas mises dans mon catalogue, parce-que je ne pouvois y mettre que les bonnes comedies regulières du bon siecle, et celles d' Andreini ne pouvoient pas certainement avoir place parmi les bons ouvrages: elles se sentent toutes de la decadence du goût, et quelques-unes que j'ai sont extrêmement obscenes. Quoi qu'il en soit Gio. Battista Andreini étoit un homme d' esprit et de lettres, et je suis persuadé que s' il avoit vêcu cinquante ans devant, il auroit suivi le chemin des autres, et que nous aurions de lui quelque bonne comedie mais enfin il étoit auteur et comedien, il ne pouvoit pas écrire autrement que les beaux esprits de son tems faisoient, et que son interêt lui conseilloit."

After the regions of conjecture have been so happily explored for the origin of the Paradise Lost, by some of the most distinguished writers of the present age, (5) it may seem great presumption to offer any thing further upon the subject. But I hope I shall be heard with indulgence when I venture to

to declare, that the point seems to have been, in a great degree, decided long since by Voltaire. This celebrated foreigner, who first directed our notice to Andreini, seems to relate a fact—he undoubtedly offers no conjecture. These are his words:

SEC. II.

"Milton, as he was travelling through Italy in his youth, saw at Florence a comedy called Adamo, written by one Andreini, a player, and dedicated to Mary de Medicis, queen of France. The subject of the play was the Fall of Man; the actors, God, the devils, the angels, Adam, Eve, the Serpent, Death, and the seven mortal sins: that topic, so improper for a drama, but so suitable to the absurd genius of the Italian stage (as it was at that time) was handled in a manner entirely conformable to the extravagance of the design. The scene opens with a chorus of angels, and a cherubim thus speaks for the rest:—'Let the rainbow be the fiddle-stick of the fiddle of the heavens! let the planets be the notes of our music! let time beat carefully the measure, and the winds make the sharps, &c.' (g) Thus the play begins, and every scene rises above the last in profusion of impertinence!

"Milton pierced through the absurdity of that performance to the hidden majesty of the subject, which, being altogether unfit for the stage, yet might be (for the genius of Milton, and for his only) the foundation of an epic poem.

(g) The better judgment of the author determined him to omit this chorus in a subsequent edition of his drama: accordingly it does not appear in that of *Perugia*, 1641.

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"He took from that ridiculous trifle the first hint of the noblest work, which human imagination has ever attempted,(b) and which he executed more than twenty years after."

This is the simple relation of a tradition which was probably current in England at the time it was visited by Voltaire a period at which, it may be presumed, some of the contemporaries of Milton were living, for he was then only about fifty years dead. Milton, with the candour which is usually united with true genius, probably acknowledged to his friends his obligations to the Italian dramatist, and the floating tradition met the ardent enquiries of the French poet.(i) But it was reserved for Mr. Hayley to discover the obscure hand which assisted Milton in raising the humble Adam to the lofty rank of an epic personage. This leads me to the other drama to which I have alluded, and which is thus entitled.

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(i) If we were certain that Voltaire had read the sacred drama of Andreini, we might safely venture to conclude that his assertion was founded in conjecture. But from his denominating a mystery, or rappresentatione, "a comedy," it would seem he had either inspected it very carelessly, or not at all. Besides, instead of every scene rising "above the last in profusion of impertinence," the piece in question contains some scenes that would not disgrace a writer of much greater dramatic powers than Andreini could boast.

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"One night I dreamt that Moses explained to me the mys-
" tery, almost in these words;

" God reveals himself to man by the intervention of reason,
" and thus infallibly ordains that reason, while she supports
" her sovereignty over the sensual inclinations in man, and
" preserves the apple of his heart from licentious appetites, in
" reward of his just obedience transforms the world into Pa-
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observe, that Andreini and Lancetta were not the first Italian writers who dramatized the story of Adam and Eve. I find it recorded by a critic and antiquary of whom Italy has reason to be proud,(l) that "nel Friuli nell' anno 1304, si rappresentarono dal clero e dal capitolo la creazione d'Adamo ed Eva."—It has been observed, that in the two dramas which we have been just considering, Satan and Lucifer are distinct personages. Where this distinction arose, I am not prepared to determine;(m) but I recollect to have read an account of a dramatic representation of The Passion, exhibited at Paris in the year 1402, in which Satan appears limping upon the stage in consequence of a severe beating which he had received from Lucifer for failing to tempt our Saviour upon the "high mountain."

Though I decline analyzing La Scena Tragica d'Adamo ed Eva, some account of the author will probably be expected. As Lancetta denominates himself Benacense, it is presumed he was a native of that part of the riviera of Salò, on the lago di Garda, which is called Tosolano, and whose inhabitants are stiled Benacenses, from Benacus, the ancient name of the lake.(n) He was, he modestly declares, neither a

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Besides the dramas of Andreini and Lancetta, Mr. Hayley seems to think that Milton had obligations to the Angeleida of Erasmo di Valvasone, a noble Venetian of an amiable character and considerable poetic powers, who devoted a large portion of a long life, embittered by infirmities, to elegant literature, in his noble castle of Valvasone, (*b*) amidst the bleak and barren mountains of Friuli. "Several passages in Valvasone," says the charming biographer of our divine bard, "induce me to think that Milton was familiar with his work." I am happy to find a poet thus honourably introduced to our notice, entitled to a place in this little memoir. Besides the poems of Angeleida and the Caccia, the romance of Lancillotto, a collection of Rime, and a translation of the Thebais of Statius in ottava rima, Erasmo made the tearful subject of Electra his own, by his excellent translation of the Electra of

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Sophocles, a work executed with "tanta franchezza, e nobiltà di stile," says Crescimbeni, "che se non pareggia il testo, se ne ha da imputare la nostra favella, e non già il traduttore."(q) This tragedy first appeared in Venice in 1588. Having sought in vain for a copy of this admired work, I cannot, as I would wish, exhibit a specimen of it; but in order to show our author's powers in the lighter species of poetry, I shall transcribe from his Rime, the following

SONETTO.

Ben potev'a io, a Elettra, esser più lieve
A far udir sù l'Arno il tuo gran pianto,
S'altri deve di maggior nerbo instanco
Fatlo a noi chiaro con più dotto accento.
E ben puoi tu, col genitor tuo spento
Lacrimar anco il tuo scemato vanto,
E'l mondo tutto, che sì nobil canto
Aspettando, pendea già tutto intento.
Ma tu, spirto sovran, c'hai voce, e modi
Da formar carme fortunato, e degno,
Del Sofocleo coturno, a che ti arresti?
Che s'io precorsi temerario al segno,
Non giudicar: ed oh secondo a le tue lodi
Pur da lungi venir Febo a me presti!

(q) If this praise be merited, Erasmo seems to have attained the object at which, according to M. Mirabaud, every translator should aspire---that is, "de cacher ses fers, et s'il se peut qu'il les couvre de fleurs. *Preface, sur Terent. Delaunde.*" M. Mirabaud himself, however, not only hides but breaks his chains, and often wanders from his author.

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The bard, Electra, whose presumptuous voice
Mimick'd in Arno's vale thy plaintive strain,
Had check'd his note, if from the muses fane
Superior chords had charm'd the list'ning skies.
Thou and thy slaughter'd sire, with mutual sighs,
May weep to see your antient vaunt how vain;
The world may weep that watch'd with anxious pain
The mighty birth, and hop'd the glorious prize.
But thou,(r) superior mind, whose descant bold
Can match the music of that noble theme
By Sophocles renown'd, ah why so slow?
Tho' thy precursor in the lists I seem
Short of thy praise, I but aspire to hold
A second place, if Phœbus grant my vow.

Without staying to apologize for this little deviation from chronological order, I shall resume the thread which I dropped while my eyes were turned upon the bard of Eden.

In the year 1614, Ridolfo Campeggi, a gentleman of Bologna, introduced, once more, upon the Italian stage, the cruel tyrant of Salerno. I shall select from the Tancredi of this author, the description of Gismonda weeping over the heart of her lover,(s) in order to afford the reader an opportunity

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Gis. Che per opra del padre
Veggiami fra le mani
Farsi il cor di Guiscardo
Spettacolo infelice, a gli occhi lassi
E ch'io morir non possa:
O ciel ben'o pur troppo
D'ogni miseria (oime) miseria estrema.
Questo, ch'io miro in questo
Empio vaso, anzi dura
Tomba, de l'alma mia;
E pur di quel bel seno
L'innamorato core:
Che così spesso al vento
De' miei cald sospiri,
Sospiró dolcementi:
Che mille volte al suono
De' miei lamenti espresse
Affetu di speranza, e di pietate:
Che sempre volontario ardito espose
(Per aquietarmi anapte)

MS. copy is preserved in the Riccardi library. *Ist. d l. Decam. p.* 257. But this indefatigable commentator does not seem to have known, that the capitolo in question was published at Florence in 1518, amongst the "capitoli and strambotti" subjoined to the Virginia of Bernardo Accolti. I am, however, inclined to think, that Manni never saw this edition of Virginia, and that he erroneously refers it to the year 1513. *Ibid. p.* 239.

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A i rischi de la morte
La generosa vita:
Ahi che (misera) è desso, e nel mirarlo
Fatto de gli occhi lagrimoso oggetto,
Non mi si squarcia il seno?
O sen d'alpestre marmo,
Che non commovi l'alma?
Q alma di macigno,
Che non sgorghi da gli occhi
Un diluvio di pianto?
Altro più vivo segno
Del mio cupo dolore,
Che di lagrime sole, attende, e brama:
Questo da la sua fede,
Per amor mio divelto,
E fradicato core:
Non più voci (o mia lingua)
Non più pianto (mie luci)
Ma ben da voi s' aspetta,
Da voi, che sostenete il mio sostegno,
Timide mani hormai ferite, e sangue:
Poiche, se il ferro tolse
La vita, a la mia vita:
Ben' è ragion, e che il ferro
Dia morte, a la mia morte;
Ma (lassa) e con quál forza
Potrò essequir la destinata impresa,
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Di questo cor sanguigno
Mi toglie ogni possanza?
Ahi che sento mancarmi;
O qual sudor di gielo
Già fammi tutta un ghiaccio?
Deh che fiere punture
Mi trafiggono il petto;
Questa è l' atroce doglia,
La doglia, che s' accampa, e si ristrigne,
Con assedio di morte, intorno il seno:
O me felice in tanto
Se farà il duol, quel che non può la mano
Sento, sento ben' io,
Che si raccoglie in fretta
Sù le smarrite labbra
Lo spirto tormentato;
Per dare (oime) quei freddi
Baci, che pur si danno
Da bocca innamorata a bocca amante
(In quello estremo tempo
De l' ultimo congedo)
A questo, in cui di novo
Le sconsolate luci io pure affiggo;
Più del mio proprio cor diletto core.
Prendi adunque, e gradisci
(O del verde bramato arida speme)
Questi baci, che lieta
A la soave bocca destinai,

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Per tuo dolce conforto
O core, che m' anciili,
Io ti miro, e non moro?
Io non moro, e sei morto
Sfortunato consorte? e di tua morte
Pur troppo veggio, un così amaro segno?
Ahi, ch' io mi vengo meno, ahi chi pietoso
Mi porge aita? ò mia nutrice; o voi
Amate damigelle, soccorrete,
La cadente Gismonda: io moro, io vegno,
Aspettami Guiscar.—(*a*)

Poetry has seldom offered a finer subject to her sister Painting, than the situation which we have just exhibited. Correggio indeed has done it ample justice; but the vulgar mind of Hogarth was incapable of conceiving the appro-

(*a*) Here Gismonda should have died: under such circumstances the fatal bowl was not necessary. However, as the author was obliged, by imperious custom, to extend his play to five acts, Gismonda not only revives, but lives on during two long acts, and at length terminates her existence by the mean of poison. It is true the author follows Boccaccio; but he ought rather, as a dramatic poet unshackled by historic truth, to have followed nature. How much more pathetic is the death of Gabrielle de Vergi, the mistress of the unfortunate Raoul de Coucy! "La dame leva le disner, et s'en alla en sa chambre, faisant moult grant douleur; et plus avoit de douleur qu'elle n'en monstroit, la chere. Et en celle douleur, à grands regrets et complainte de la mort de son ami, fina sa vie et moprut." This is the simple relation of an old chronicle, written in 1380, of which the Duke de la Valliere, in his romance, has caught all the pathos, and happily expressed it in two lines.

En prononçant. . . . . *Je vous adore*,
Un froid mortel saisit ses sens.

See *Mem. hist. sur Raoul de Coucy*, a little work, equally curious and elegant, printed at Paris 1781, *tom.* i. *p.* 107. *tom.* ii. *p.* 106.

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SECT. II. priate expression.(v)—Campeggi died in Bologna, 1624 universally lamented.(w)

In 1646 died Count Fulvio Testi, whose Isola d'Alcina(x) had for some time engrossed the public attention. This drama is praised for the simplicity of the plot; but the author by the frequent use of rhyme, and the frequent introduction of airs, is accused of having departed too far from the solemn dignity of tragedy. But in this he only endeavoured to gratify the prevailing taste of his country; for "il secolo," says Signorelli, ammolito e stanco dal piagnere colla severa tragedia giva desiderando i vezzi della musica in ogni, spettacolo."(y) This rage for music, thus favoured by Testi, gave birth to the Opera, and now

(v) The Sigismonda of Hogarth, which I once saw, appeared to me, as she did to Lord Orford, "no more like Sigismonda, than I to Hercules." *Anecd. of Paint. in Eng.* vol. iv. p. 167. *Lond.* 1782. oct.

(w) A dramatic pastoral, (*Filacinto, Ven.* 1678,) by Campeggi, now lies before me, with intermedij da musica, in which Echo is introduced as she is described in Cynthia's Revels

Enriche with vocall and artificiall powre.

Baretti, having enumerated some of the best pastoral dramas, proceeds; "to these our harmless nuns join the Filacinto, the author of which I do not at present recollect." *Acc. of Italy*, vol. i. p. 181.

(x) The only edition of this drama that has met my observation, is that inserted in the *Poesie Liriche* of the author. *Ven. appresso li Prodani*, 1678.

(y) Thomson, in an apostrophe to Oppression, attributes the prevalence of the passion for music among the Italians to a different cause.

By thee relentless seiz'd their better joys,
To the soft aid of cordial airs they fly,
Breathing a kind oblivion o'er their woes,
And love and music melt their souls away.

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a race of heroes fill'd the stage
Who rant by note, and thro' the gamut rage;
In songs and airs express their martial fire,
Combat in trills, and in a fugue expire.(z)

Ariosto, who delivers the prologue to this tragedy, is made o lament the softness of the age, no longer able to bear the ight of the fatal bowl, or reeking dagger, upon the stage.

Ma d' ogni sangue immaculate e pure
Sian l' italiche scene, o bastin solo,
Per destare in altrui pietade e duolo,
D' amante cor le non mortal sciagure &c.(a)

In this beautiful little drama there are two chorusses;— one composed of knights transformed into different animals by Alcina, and another consisting of the female attendants of

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(a) It was probably in compliance with this change in the public taste, that Vicenzo Gisti only narrates all the shocking circumstances attending the death of the hero of his tragedy of Hermete, *(Ven.* 1608.*)* In the former age, this bloody spectacle would have been exhibited on the stage. Gio Battista Alberi observes the same delicacy in regard to the nice eelings of the auditory, in his Hippanda. *(Bres.* 1614.*)* This tragedy, which seems to have scaped the notice of every historian of the Italian stage whom I have consulted, has much nerit, particularly in the manner of treating its preternatural characters. The voce dal tempio, which addresses the supplicants in the 2d scene of Act. iv. must have an awful effect in epresentation.

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SECT. II. the enchantress. The latter is stationary; but the former only appears occasionally. The chorus of enchanted knights, who lament their

dura sorte
Perder la vita, e non trovar la morte,

conclude the piece with the following

BALLETTO.

Quando da l' onde
Le chiome bionde
Alza il rettor del lume,
Sù per la riva
Aura lasciva
Suol dispiegar le piume,
Al dolce spirto
Curva ogni mirto
La cima sibilante;
E rugiadosa
Apre ogni rosa
Il sen porporeggiante.
Dal leggier fiato
Ne reo agitato
Increspa i falsi argenti,
E per li quieti
Campi di Teti
Danzano i muti armenti.

Miser

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Miser

Miser nocchiero,
Ch' al lusinghiero
Venticel presta fede,
Scioglie le vele,
E l' intedele
Onde co' remi fiede.
Ma non inchina
Ne la marina
Del mauro atlante il giorno,
Che procelloso
Che tempestoso
Freme Nettun d' intorno.
Or scende, or poggia
Ad orza, à poggia
L' abbandonato pino:
Al fine affonda
Dentro à quell' onda,
Ove scherzò il mattino.
Folle quell' alma
Che crede à calma
Di feminile amore;
In un momento
Veste il contento
Abito di dolore.
Quella bellezza,
Ch' or t' accarezza,
F' anciderà frà poco
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SECT. VI.

Nè fedeltade
In cor di donna hà loco.
Splendete ardete,
Quanto sapete,
Lusinghiere pupille,
Ch' aver ricetto
In questo petto
Non pon nove faville.
Ridete, ò labbri,
E i bei cinabbri
Promettan gioa, e pace,
Il cor tradito
Sà, che l' invito
È perfido, e fallace.
Beltà sincera,
Dolcezza vera
Sol colà in cielo alberga.
Deh, vesti l' ale,
E à l' immortale,
Magion l' anima s' erga.

When o'er the wave
From ocean's cave
Ascends the "bright-hair'd youth of morn,"
Along the vale
The wanton gale
Skims light, on busy pinions borne.
Yon myrtle grove,
The breath of love

Thro'

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Thro'

Thro' all its whisp'ring files obeys,
  Each dewy rose
  Its bosom shows,
And every glowing tint displays.
  The light-wing'd breeze
  Salutes the seas,
And curls the flood in crisped smiles;
  O'er the smooth plains
  Where Thetis reigns,
Her shoals disport in wanton wiles.
  Unhappy he
  Who puts to sea
Confiding in her faithless gale,
  Whose oar divides
  The limpid tides
While flatt'ring breezes court the sail.
  But, ere the day
  With purple ray
Retires beyond the western bound,
  Stern Neptune raves
  With dashing waves
While tempests sweep his ample round.
  Now low, now high,
  Twixt sea and sky,
To north and south the vessel borne,
  At length divides,
  And drinks the tides
That kiss'd her keel at early morn.

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So weak the mind
Which hopes to find
In woman's love a voyage fair;
One moment seek
The smiles of peace
To frenzy turn'd, or dark despair.
That syren smile
Whose sweets beguile
Your ravish'd sense, will pierce your breast:
Nor loyalty,
Nor pity's plea,
Within a female heart can rest.
Alluring eyes
Where Cupid plies
His burning shafts in ev'ry smile;
Your magic spells
My heart repels,
No sparkles wake the funeral pile.
Ye lips so sweet,
That breathe deceit,
Yet promise peace and lasting joys;
The ransom'd heart
Eludes your art,
And all your proffer'd sweets defies.
The perfect fair,
And joy sincere
Are only to be found above—

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Thithe

Thither aspire
On wings of fire,
And seek the seat of joy and love.

This chorus will probably remind the reader of the canzoni a ballo. (*b*) The measure is the same; and that it was intended,

(*b*) Of this airy measure, a specimen is given in Mr. Roscoe's *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*. *ed.* i. *Append.* N. XLI. drawn from a little collection of Canzons published at Florence in 1568, and attributed to Lorenzo and his friend Politiano. From a collection of ballads, songs, &c. printed, without date, at Modena, and now lying before me, I shall transcribe a canzone a ballo by an inferior hand, not only to exhibit to my readers a specimen of such productions, but to show the kind of poetry which formerly vocalized the streets of Modena.

CANZONE.

Ogni cosa vince amore
Non bisogna contrastare
Non si può con lui durare.
Che gli e troppe gran Signore,
Ogni cosa vince amore.
Il serpente ch' è si fiero
Tutto d'ira, e tosco pieno
Muta in mel l' ira e il veneno.
Sotto l' amoroso impero.
Et humano pel sentiero
Come agnel del gregge fuore.
Ogni cosa vince amore.
La scientia che si degna
Qui non val ne la ragione,
Preso, è vinto Salamone
Segue l' amorosa insegna
Questo esempio ci disegna
Che gli giusto e gran signore,
Ogni cosa vince amore,

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SECT. II. intended, like them, to be accompanied with dancing may (as I have elsewhere remarked), be inferred from the title which it bears of balletto. But we must not dismiss the Isola d' Alcina without observing, that it seized so forcibly upon the fancy of the famous astronomer Cassini, that it induced him to descend from the spheres, and attempt a tragedy upon the same subject.

Fulvio Testi was born (1593) in Ferrara, whence he was removed (1591) to Modena, where he received his education. Entering early into the service of the family of Este,—a fa-

Fu David il gran profeta
Sopra ogn' altro accetto a Dio,
E pur volse il suo desio
Verso quel ardente mieta
Non è amor la voce detta
Dentro nel tuo furore.
Ogni cosa vince amore.
Quando vaglia la fortuna
Con amor vendetta fa parte,
Ciò dimostra Achille, e Marte
E qual più la fama appruova,
Rompe in mezzo ogni durezza,
Questa colpa di dolce amore.
Ogni cosa vince amore.

In this little collection are some dramatic ballads "da recitare in maschera," an egloga pastorale and several smaller compositions in the dialect of Modena. The title-page of each is adorned with a rude print in wood. As such productions usually breathe the spirit, and often exhibit a faithful picture of the manners of the times, a select collection of them in the different dialects of Italy, with their respective prints, would be an acceptable present to the literary world. An elegant model for such a publication, offers itself in *Pieces of ancient popular poetry*. *Lond.* 1791.

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mily not less friendly to the muses than that of the Medici (c) SECT. II.
—he soon became a favourite, and was employed by his patron upon several public occasions. Sometimes we find him in the court of Spain; sometimes in that of the emperor. But wherever he was, or however employed, his muse constantly attended him. While in the court of Spain he lamented, in some sweet lines, the death of Lope de Vega, and celebrated the charms of a lady "per tutto simigliante ad un' altra ch' aveva lasciata in Italia." In the German court he complains in a sonnet, of the rigour of the climate, and writes another on a "bella dama tedesca che pariando non era intesa dall' amante." And during his stay in Rome he,

(c) This assertion is eloquently supported by Gibbon in his *Antiquities of the house of Brunswick*. After dilating on the learned seminaries instituted by the family of Este, and their encouragement of the drama, he observes that, in their court "was invented and refined the pastoral comedy, a romantic Arcadia, which violates the truth of manners, and the simplicity of nature, but which commands our indulgence, by the elaborate luxury of eloquence and wit. The father of the Tuscan muses, the sublime but unequal Dante," he continues, "had pronounced that Ferrara was never honored with the name of a poet: he would have been astonished to behold the chorus of bards, of melodious swans, who now peopled the banks of the Po. In the court of duke Borso, and his successor, Boiardo, count of Scandiano, was respected as a noble, a soldier and a scholar; his vigorous fancy first celebrated the loves and exploits of the Paladin Orlando; and his fame has at once been preserved and eclipsed by the brighter glories of the continuator of his work. Ferrara may boast that on classic ground, Ariosto and Tasso lived and sung; that the lines of the Orlando furioso, and the Gerusalemme Liberata, were inscribed in everlasting characters under the eye of the first and second Alphonso. In a period of near three thousand years, five great epic poets have arisen in the world; and it is a singular prerogative, that two of the five should be claimed as their own, by a short age, and a petty state."

Since transcribing the foregoing passage, the sole remaining male of the house of Este, has been driven from his dominions by an unprovoked enemy, to sigh, languish, and ultimately sink, under a weight of years, upon the banks of the Rhine.

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(c) This assertion is eloquently supported by Gibbon in his *Antiquities of the house of Brunswick*. After dilating on the learned seminaries instituted by the family of Este, and their encouragement of the drama, he observes that, in their court "was invented and refined the pastoral comedy, a romantic Arcadia, which violates the truth of manners, and the simplicity of nature, but which commands our indulgence, by the elaborate luxury of eloquence and wit. The father of the Tuscan muses, the sublime but unequal Dante," he continues, "had pronounced that Ferrara was never honored with the name of a poet: he would have been astonished to behold the chorus of bards, of melodious swans, who now peopled the banks of the Po. In the court of duke Borso, and his successor, Boiardo, count of Scandiano, was respected as a noble, a soldier and a scholar; his vigorous fancy first celebrated the loves and exploits of the Paladin Orlando; and his fame has at once been preserved and eclipsed by the brighter glories of the continuator of his work. Ferrara may boast that on classic ground, Ariosto and Tasso lived and sung; that the lines of the Orlando furioso, and the Gerusalemme Liberata, were inscribed in everlasting characters under the eye of the first and second Alphonso. In a period of near three thousand years, five great epic poets have arisen in the world; and it is a singular prerogative, that two of the five should be claimed as their own, by a short age, and a petty state."

Since transcribing the foregoing passage, the sole remaining male of the house of Este, has been driven from his dominions by an unprovoked enemy, to sigh, languish, and ultimately sink, under a weight of years, upon the banks of the Rhine.

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(d) Bergamo di Botta was, I believe, the first modern writer who made a public attempt at uniting music, dancing and poetry. In a fete of entertainment devised by him, and given in Tortona so early as 1486, on occasion of the marriage of Galeazzo, duke of Milan and Isabella of Arragon, we find those three elegant arts morally aiding each other in a manner that does honor to the taste and genius of Bergamo. M. de Cahusac concludes a minute account of this fete with the following observation: "c'est cette représentation dramatique, peu régulière, mais remplie cependant de galanterie, d'imagination et de variété qui a donné dans la suite l'idée des carousels, des opéras, et des grands ballets à machines." *Trait. hist. de la danse. tom.* ii. *p.* 79.

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It's very true;—but we'll proceed.

In 1655 cardinal Sforza Pallavicino, while yet a Jesuit published his Erminigilda, to which, like our Dryden, he prefixed a long discourse in its defence, in which he recommend the use of rhyme in tragedy.(h) This drama was written for and first represented in the Jesuit's college in Rome. Should Pallavicino be forgotten as a poet, he will be long remembered as the author of an excellent history of the council of Trent. He died in 1667.

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(i) Dottori has found a powerful rival in Mr. Preston, who has made the tragic story of Aristodemo's daughter the subject of his Messenian Daniel, or the Cruel Virtue, a tragedy rich in poetic beauties, and more deeply interesting than that of Dottori. Though abounding in incident, it is as simple in its plot as a drama of ancient Greece. And in the hymning processions which appear before, and during the sacrifice in the temple of Apollo, we have an admirable substitute for the chorus. The bloody deed which shocks us so much in Dottori's tragedy, is happily palliated (if I may so express myself) by Mr. Preston's, by the rash interfering of Philoclea. *Poet. works. Dub.* 1793. vol. II. The abate Monti takes up the subject where Dottori and Mr. Preston drop it.

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E se non placa—i dei d' abisso Itome.
Misere, ah come—'l regno fia disfatta!
L' ultimo lutto—l'indovin predice,
Gl' ultimi danni!
Già per tant' anni—siamo usate al pianto.
Che solo il Xanto—la metà ne conta.
Una sol' onta—così lungo sdegno
Dunque produce!
O di Polluce—imitator insano,
E tu profano—Castore mal finto,
Sparta ebbe vinto—quando profanaste
Le are sacrate.
Torna all' usate—lagrime e dolore,
Senta il furore—già del ciel la destra
Fatta maestra—a flagellar l'ignudo
Seno dolente.
Il duol frequente—tiene sparso il crine
Alle rapine—della mano infesta,
Edi funesta—voce di lamento
Ecco risuona.

The Aristodemo was first introduced upon the stage by Pietro Cotta detto Celio, an actor of great celebrity in his day. Determined to restore tragedy, if possible, to the rank it had lost upon the Italian stage, he resolved on making the experiment at Venice with this tragedy, about forty years after its appearance at Padua. He announced his intention by

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by an advertisement setting forth, that Harlequin(*l*) and all his merry associates should be excluded from the drama which he proposed representing; a drama which, he said, was so extremely affecting, that he was confident it would draw a flood of tears from the eyes of the audience; in short it was a "nouveau genre de poëme dramatique et tout-à-fait different de ceux qu'ils avoient accoûtumé de voir." Either from the merit of the piece, or the novelty of the representation, the experiment succeeded;—and tragedy triumphed for awhile. But its triumph was short. Such of the followers of Charles V. as had settled in Italy, had so grossly vitiated the public taste, that ridiculous farcical representations on the model of the Spanish comedy, were again demanded. The tragic muse, in indignation, quit the stage. And Cotta followed in disgust.

(*l*) When we decompound the character of Harlequin, we find it composed of such heterogeneous particles that we are inclined to think it must have been the invention, or composition of a barbarous age. Yet there are good grounds for supposing that Harlequin was an important character amongst the mimi who performed the ἐπεισόδια or entremêts, at the social meetings of the Romans, even in the polished age of Augustus. Nor is it improbable that this character was revived, in the thirteenth century, in the splendid court of Can Grande, where, we are told, "che alle lor cene aggiugnevano il piacere di armoniche, sinfonie, di buffoni, di giocolieri." *Stor. della letter. Italian. tom.* v. *p.* 21. Whether the Harlequin of ancient Rome sometimes excited a laugh by the mean of an occasional murder, I cannot determine; but his Italian descendant is certainly often droll in that way. Lady Miller was present at a great slaughter in Genoa by this mirth-inspiring character. *Lett. from Italy, vol.* I. *p.* 314. "La maschera, il vestito del nostro Arlecchino" says a learned Italian, "rappresenta a meraviglia il carattere dei satiri, di cui parla Orazio. Li satiri degli antichi, assomigliavano al capro; Arlecchino dei nostri tempi, assomiglia al gatto." *Lo Spet. di R. Orazio Flacco. Rom.* 1784. *p.* 44. But it is not in appearance only that the modern Harlequin resembles a cat: like that animal, he is playful and mischievous.

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by an advertisement setting forth, that Harlequin(*l*) and all his merry associates should be excluded from the drama which he proposed representing; a drama which, he said, was so extremely affecting, that he was confident it would draw a flood of tears from the eyes of the audience; in short it was a "nouveau genre de poëme dramatique et tout-à-fait different de ceux qu'ils avoient accoûtumé de voir." Either from the merit of the piece, or the novelty of the representation, the experiment succeeded;—and tragedy triumphed for awhile. But its triumph was short. Such of the followers of Charles V. as had settled in Italy, had so grossly vitiated the public taste, that ridiculous farcical representations on the model of the Spanish comedy, were again demanded. The tragic muse, in indignation, quit the stage. And Cotta followed in disgust.

(*l*) When we decompound the character of Harlequin, we find it composed of such heterogeneous particles that we are inclined to think it must have been the invention, or composition of a barbarous age. Yet there are good grounds for supposing that Harlequin was an important character amongst the mimi who performed the ἐπεισόδια or entremêts, at the social meetings of the Romans, even in the polished age of Augustus. Nor is it improbable that this character was revived, in the thirteenth century, in the splendid court of Can Grande, where, we are told, "che alle lor cene aggiugnevano il piacere di armoniche, sinfonie, di buffoni, di giocolieri." *Stor. della letter. Italian. tom.* v. *p.* 21. Whether the Harlequin of ancient Rome sometimes excited a laugh by the mean of an occasional murder, I cannot determine; but his Italian descendant is certainly often droll in that way. Lady Miller was present at a great slaughter in Genoa by this mirth-inspiring character. *Lett. from Italy, vol.* I. *p.* 314. "La maschera, il vestito del nostro Arlecchino" says a learned Italian, "rappresenta a meraviglia il carattere dei satiri, di cui parla Orazio. Li satiri degli antichi, assomigliavano al capro; Arlecchino dei nostri tempi, assomiglia al gatto." *Lo Spet. di R. Orazio Flacco. Rom.* 1784. *p.* 44. But it is not in appearance only that the modern Harlequin resembles a cat: like that animal, he is playful and mischievous.

Of

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Of this distinguished actor, and warm friend to genuine tragedy, thus brought forward to our notice, the reader would probably wish to indulge in contemplating the character as drawn by Riccoboni, to whom he was personally known. "Ce jeune homme, qui ne cherchoit qu'à se faire honneur, passa par tous les degrés de la comedie, et par son application et son étude parvint enfin à être chef d'une troupe et le premier acteur de son tems. Il a toujours passé pour un homme d'une grande probité, ennemi declaré de toutes les pensées équivoques et de toutes les licences, qui à la fin du siécle passé étoient si fort en usage sur nos theâtres dereglés; il commença par épurer le théâtre et fit toute l'attention possible pour l'enrichier des meilleures pieces." This is full, flattering, and, in many respects, satisfactory. But Riccoboni was too well acquainted with the nature of his profession to attempt to give an idea of Cotta's powers as an actor: the possessor of an art which, like his, yields no objects,

> shrinks from time's sword,
> Feeble tradition is his memory's guards

The abdication of Cotta accelerated the fall of the public stage which had been, for some time, sinking; indeed, previous to his appearance, it had sunk so low that it was abandoned by all lovers of the genuine effusions of the dramatic muse. This, however, is not to be wondered at, if the Italian theatres in general were not better appointed and conducte

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Augusto omai son giunta
Alla funesta ripa, e'l piede or pongo
Nella Barca fatal, ch'a me s'accosta.
Moro, e più che'l morire,
Mi duol l' accusa data
All' anima tua grande
D'infedeltà, di tradimento. È fiero
L'aspetto della morte,
Ma più fiero è l'aspetto
Di sì gran colpa. Acorco
M' ha scoperto l'errore, o invitto eroe
Ricevi questi estremi
Sospiri della vita,
Con cui se n'esce unita alle preghiere
L'anima supplicante.
Consola il mio passaggio
Col perdonar sì temerario ardire.
Innocente tu sei, e fu del cielo
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Agrippa tuo dentro al real cortile
Perdesse quella carta,
In cui da giusto nume
Fu scritta la mia morte. Io son la rea,
Che ad Antonio, che me più che l'impero
Del mondo apprezzar volle,
Rotta ho la fede. E 'l fallo mio sì grave,
Che mi duol, che 'l mio petto
Sol d' una sia capace.
Nè giusto è, che ti lagni,
Se la parca mi toglie il nobil dono,
Fattomi già da te, dell' amor tuo.
Troppo indegna è colei,
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Non dovuto; non merta
Le lagrime d' Augusto un core infido.
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Le forbice fatale il debil filo
Della vita cadente. Ombra adorata,
Se qui d' intorno sei,
Non isdegnar i prieghi
D' un' anima pentita, e meco torna
Al tenebrosa lido, ed assicura
Alla tua Cleopatra il passo orrendo.
Tu m' addita il sentier, tu segna l' orme;
Riparami dà morsi
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E per fuggir un sol sospiro aspetta.
Fortuna hai vinto: o patria, o amici addio.

The tragedies of Delfino had received their meed of praise when the Corradino of Caraccio was represented for the first time in Rome in 1694, four years after the publication of his epic poem of L' Impero vendicato, which he considered as an undertaking less difficult to perform than the composition of a good tragedy.(s) It was under a similar impression that Alessandro Tassoni, author of La Secchia Rapita, suppressed his tragic powers. Muratori informs us he had seen an inedited tragedy entitled L' Errico, written by Tassoni, in his eighteenth year, which would have done honor, in every point of view, to a veteran poet, but which he could not be prevailed on to publish, either from diffidence of its merit, or of his own talents for such an undertaking.(t) Perhaps an-

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Il mio Vergerio già fi bcemente
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Tenne lo spettator più volte intento:
Chiudean cinque e cinque atti gli accidenti
Di due giornate, e 'l quinto, ch'era in prima,
Poich' havea 'l caso, e gli animi sospesi,
Chiudea la scena, et ammorzava i lumi.
Il popolo infiammato dal diletto
Ne stava il giorno, che veniva appresso,
Bramando 'l foco de' secondi torchi.
Quindi correa la calca a tutti seggi
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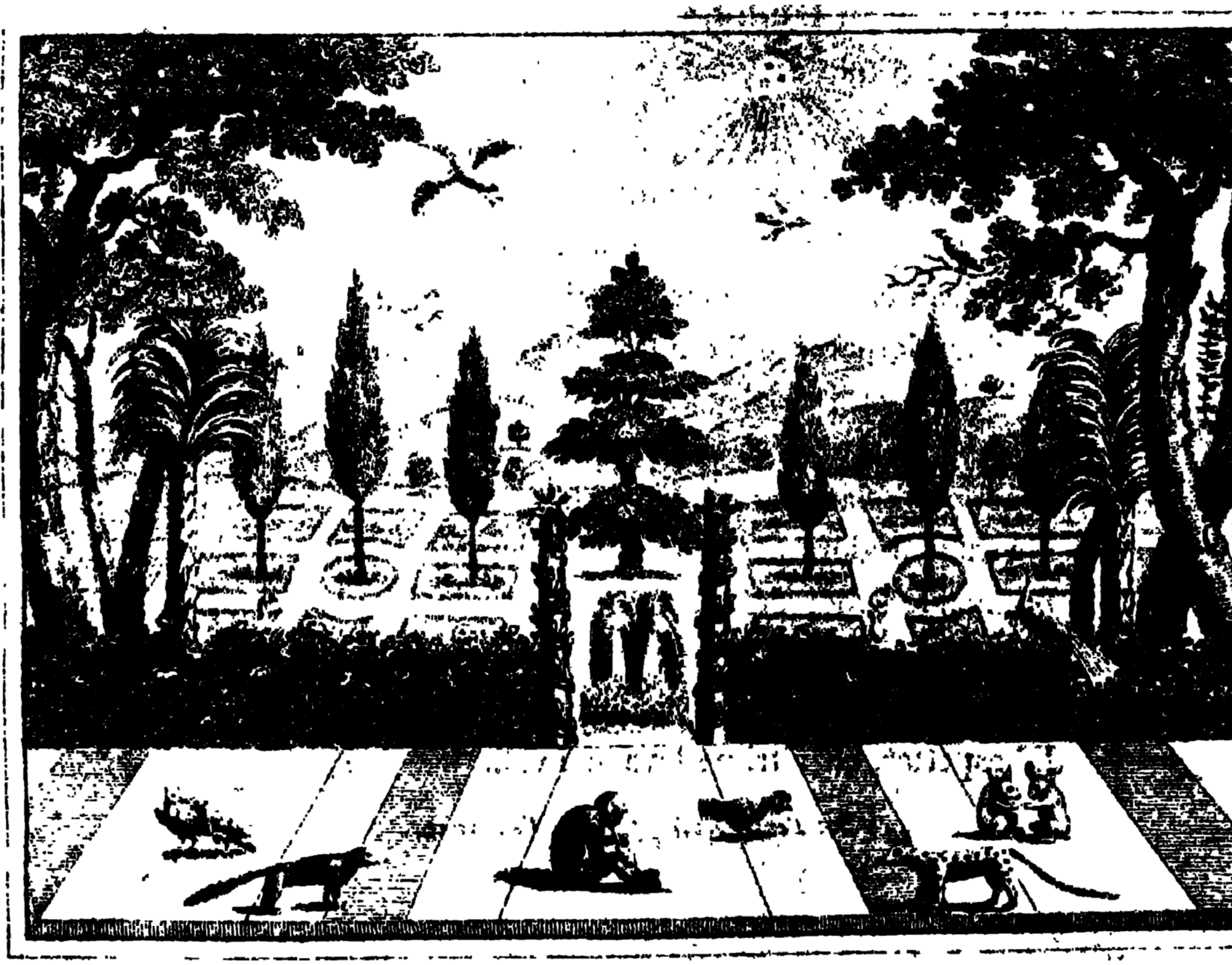

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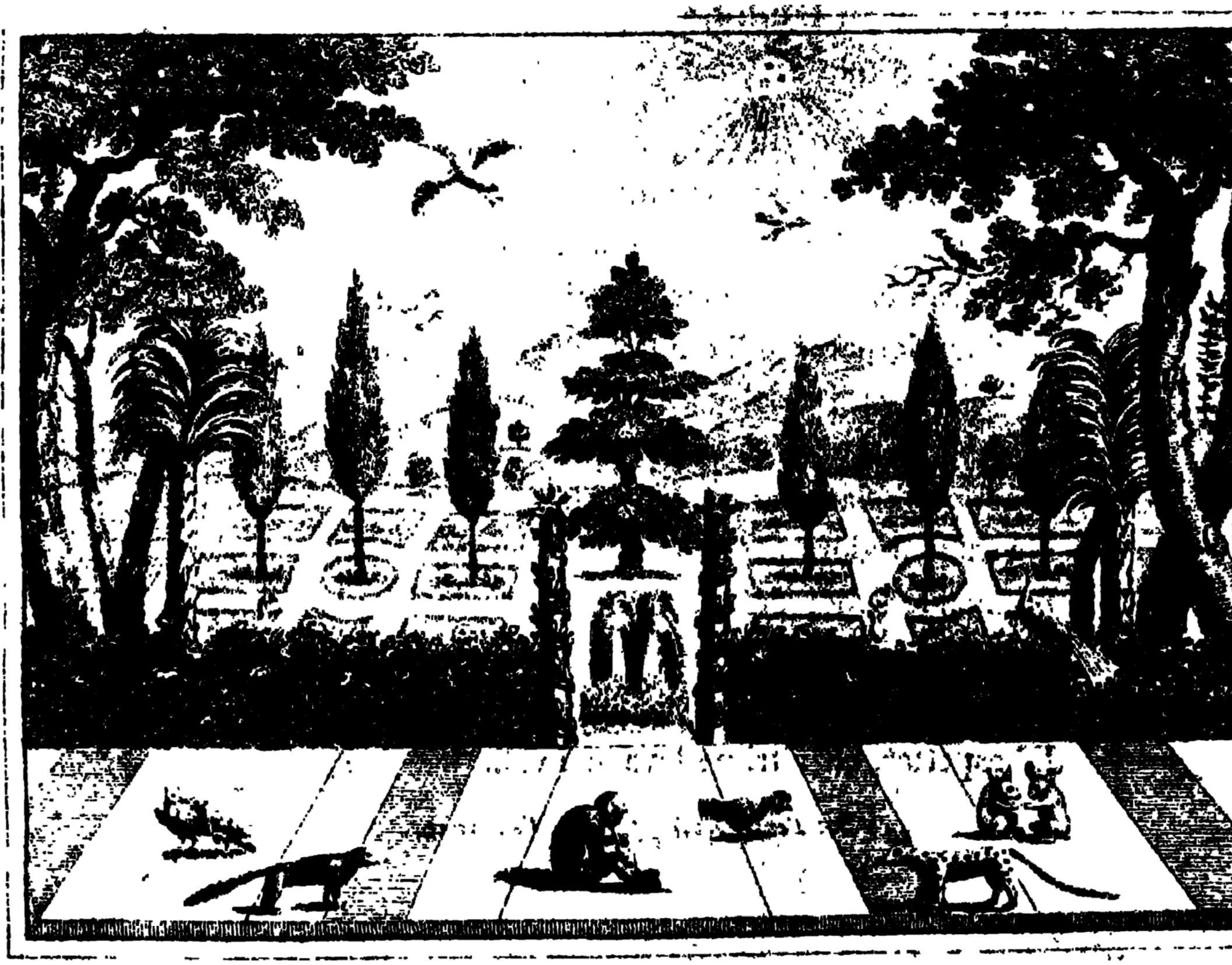

HISTORICAL MEMOIR
ON
ITALIAN TRAGEDY.

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Al presente, l' orribile è corretto
Dell' antica tragedia, il coro escluso,
Ed a quella si è dato un nuovo aspetto.

But the vows of poets, like those of lovers, are seldom religiously observed. In the period under consideration the chorus, it is true, lost much of its importance; but it was not universally rejected; a few poets of the old school still retained it, and their example found occasional imitators.

But let us proceed to the enjoyment of the intellectual splendour which awaits us. In a period so auspicious to the muses, Melpomene, it may be presumed, had many votaries. The first in her weeping train who attracts our notice, is Pier Jacopo Martelli, a Bolognese, who died in 1727. His Perselide, Ifigenia in Tauri, and Alceste were represented, says Signorelli, with unequivocal applause by the company of Riccoboni in Venice, Verona and Bologna. We find not only in those tragedies, he continues, but in his Procolo, Cicerone Q. Fabio and Taimingi, genuine tragic beauties. In the Perselide is particularly admired the happy manner in which the three principal characters are marked: the magnanimity of Mustapha, the pathetic tenderness of Perselius, and the jealousy of power and relentless cruelty of Solimano, evinced

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Scacciam la debolezza sin colla crudeltade.

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Attracted by the Cato of Addison in an Italian dress, I shall pause for a moment to examine it. The year after the appearance of this noble tragedy in England, it forced its way into Italy. Antonio Maria Salvini, who, according to his friend Redi, had

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Why shrinks the soul
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Ritirata in se stessa e impaurita
Alla distruzion s' aombra e fugge?
E la divinita che muove dentro;
Il cielo è quel che l' avvenire addita,
E all' uom l' eternitate accenna e mostra.
Eternità! pensier grato e tremendo &c.

Nor is the picture of the vestal virgin trembling at the altar, ess beautiful in the copy than in the original.

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Tu puoi carezzar anco
Una vestale pallida tremante
Che già miri spirar la santa fiamma.

Salvini's translation of several Greek and Roman classics evince him to have been, what Doctor Johnson denominates him, a "linguist skilfully pedantic;" and the groans of the press during the greater part of his extended life, bore re peated testimony to his industry. He died in Florence in 1729, "con danno inesplicabile delle buone lettere," say one of his biographers.

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CAPESTRINO, CAPITANO.

Cap. Non mi dite voi nulla signor capitano.

Ca. Que quieres que yo diga?

Cap. Della lettera, c' havete riceruta.

Ca. Yo diré. El duque d' Alva my ruega que yo me degnase el mas presto que podiere ire en Flandres, que tien mucho menester do my.

Cap. Per conto della guerra forse?

Ca. Por esto si. Por que de mis pareios son alla muy pocos al acundo. Y en de alla muy escansado por no esser alla el capitan Orsin da Ribera tuo amo.

Cap. Ve'l credo certo. Ma che carica egli vi offerisce?

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Cap. L' ho inteso dire.

Ca. Mas que digo yo de Tunez? &c.

The introducing of different nations on the stage at the same time, all speaking, with equal purity and propriety a common language, is one of those violations of verisimilitude, which time has sanctioned, and which, from its ministering to our amusement, we patiently endure. Eschylus and Plautus seem to have been struck with the absurdity of this practice; but their judgment yielding to the desire of giving general pleasure, they were content to leave each a single monument of their dissent. (See the *Agamemnon* and *Pseudol.*) It should seem, however, that the "Babylonish dialect" of Ruzante was relished by his countrymen, as it was imitated by succeeding comic poets, and has even still its admirers. It is curious to observe a similar practice prevailing on the stages of the east at a remote period. In the dramas of Cálidás (the brightest of the nine gems of the court of Vicramáditya, who reigned in India, in the first century before Christ), we find, says Sir William Jones, "the men of rank and learning represented speaking pure sanscrit, and the women prácrit, which is little more than the language of the Bráhmens melted down by a delicate articulation to the softness of Italian; while the low persons of the drama speak the vulgar dialects of the several provinces which they are supposed to inhabit." *Pref. to Sacontala, Lond.* 1790. *p.* 9.

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Fallen from her high estate,

we must honour the man, if we cannot admire the poet. Dr. Warton, a warm admirer of Gravina, calls him "a man of great learning and a clear head, an admirable civilian as well as critic." But he is silent with respect to his poetic powers. Perhaps the best apology for the tameness of our author's tragedies may be found in that elegant writers remark on the effect of the study of criticism, in his Essay on the genius and writings of Pope: "It may be, says he, that the natural powers are confined and debilitated by that timidity and caution which are occasioned by a rigid regard to the dictates of art." Now it is to his critical works that Gravina owes his celebrity. But should he be forgotten as a writer, he will ever be remembered as the patron of Metastasio. Struck with the budding beauties of that charming poet's mind, he adopted and instructed him, and dying (1718) before the lyric bard had attained his twenty first year, left him the heir to his fortune and his learning. Nor was Metastasio ungrateful. Weeping over the grave of his patron, his grief and gratitude found utterance in the pathetic elegy of La Strada della Gloria. The vivid picture given of the

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SECT. III. venerable critic in that sweet poem, will, I trust, be deemed a suitable embellishment of this article.

Già l' ardente desío cede al difetto
Del mio poter ; ma venne a darmi aita
Del buon maestro il venerato aspetto.

Riconosco la guancia scolorita
Dal lungo studio, e' l magistrale impero,
Che l' ampia fronte gli adornava in vita.

A me rivolse il ciglio suo severo,
Da cui pur dianzi io regolar solea
Delle mie labbri i moti, e del pensiero.

From the contemplation of this picture, I shall beg of my readers to turn to a biographical sketch of Gravina by the hand of a master. " This learned civilian" says Doctor Burney, " was born in the diocese of Cosenza, in the pontificate of Innocent XI. and was called to Rome and honoured with a professional chair, as a doctor of laws, at the university della Sapienza. He had many friends by whom he was sincerely loved and respected ; but he had likewise many enemies, who tried to depress and mortify him in their writings. The celebrated satires of Quintus Settanus were all written against him, under the feigned name of Filodemo. They are extremely bitter ; but it is imagined that Gravina brought severity upon himself, by his rough treatment of others in his critical writings, where he neither spared the inge-

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It is with pleasure and pride I here add to the list of the tragic poets of Italy, the name of Pietro Trapasso Metastasio. While yet a boy, and imbibing the instructions of Gravina, he wrote his Giustino, a wonderful production when the age of the author is considered. I shall take the liberty to borrow from his learned and ingenious biographer, a critical analysis of this drama. "Atto II. sc. 4 of this tragedy is finely written, and abounding in profound sentiments. There are choruses à la Grecque, and airs all' Italienne, at the end of each act; but of which (as there are five acts)

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Che la donçella sua, per esser bruna,
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and which she

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Udito ho sempre
Ch' uomo al cui senno sacri riti ed alme
Commesse furo, se con voglia ingorda
Alle profane cose intende, e lascia
All' altrui cura il gregge, e sol da quello
Toglie da lungi il ricco frutto, è indegno
Del sacro grado, e'l profan male adempie.
Gen. Chi serve al re non è men caro a Dio.
Recar. Caro è a Dio sol chi al suo dovere intende,
E il tuo non è di consigliar regnanti.

Marchese died in 1753, "ammirato per le sue virtù."

Marchese was followed by the learned and philosophic Antonio Conti, a Venetian nobleman, who, at an advanced age bent his genius to the composition of tragedy. From the pen of this venerable poet fell Giunio Bruto, Marco Bruto, Giulio Cesare and Druso. Either from the phlegm of age, or from a frigid chasteness of judgment, there is a tameness in those tragedies unsuited to the stage; but in pureness of style, and truth of character, they have seldom been excelled. therefore though they cannot keep the stage, they will ever hold a distinguished place in the closet. But we must not pass lightly over

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Non vo più rimaner; da questi affani
Ben so la via d' uscir; ma convien prima
Sbramar l' avido cor con la vendetta.
Quel scellerato in mio poter vorrei,
Per trarne prima, s' ebbe parte in questo
Assassinio il tiranno; io voglio poi
Con una scure spalancargli il petto,

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Voglio strappargli il cor, voglio co' denti
Lacerarlo e sbranarlo.(s)

Euriso, hear me;
I will not drag my life on after this;
Out of these troubles well I know the way;
But first 'tis meet I satiate with revenge
My greedy heart. I would within my power
That wicked wretch, to gather from him first,
If any part of this belongs to the tyrant:
Then will I with an axe open his breast
And thence root out his heart, and with my teeth
Mangle and tear it all to pieces.

MR. AYRE.

Neither is Ismena's ungenerous mode of betraying Egistu to her mistress, perfectly reconcileable with vraisemblance The garrulity of Polidore too, is reprehensible: when w are deeply interested in the fate of Egistus, he distracts ou attention with reflections on old age, and lamentations fo the loss of that vigour which was once his boast. But an

(s) I thought the barbarous revenge meditated by Merope was without a parallel on th modern stage, till happening to open the Titus Andronicus, or The Rape of Lavinia b Ed. Ravenscroft, I found the following speech by the Moor, after the Empress had stabbe her child.

She has out-done me, ev'n in mine own art;
Out-done me in murder—Kill'd her own child;
Give it me,—*I'll eat it.*

fault

ECT. III.

Voglio strappargli il cor, voglio co' denti
Lacerarlo e sbranarlo.(s)

Euriso, hear me;
I will not drag my life on after this;
Out of these troubles well I know the way;
But first 'tis meet I satiate with revenge
My greedy heart. I would within my power
That wicked wretch, to gather from him first,
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Such of my fair readers as are acquainted with the appre-hensions of a mother for an exiled child, will, I am sure, acknowledge that the following lines bear the stamp of na-ture.

Mer. . . . . . Ma se ancora
Fosse falso sospetto, or ti par' egli,
Che il sol peregrinar del mio Cresfonte
Mi dia cagion di dover' esser lieta?
Rozzo garzon, solo, inesperto, ignaro
De le vie, de' costumi, e de i perigli,
Ch' appoggio alcun non ha, povero, e privo
D' ospiti; qual di vitto, e qual d' albergo
Non patirà disagio? quante volte
Al l' altrui mense accosterassi, un pane
Chiedendo umile? e ne sarà fors' anche
Scacciato; egli, il cui padre a ricca mensa
Tanta gente accoglica. Ma poi, se infermo
Cade, com' è pur troppo agevol cosa,
Chi n' avrà cura? ei giacerassi in terra
Languente, afflitto, abbandonato, e un sorso
D' acqua non vi sarà chi pur gli porga,

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O Dei, che s' io potessi almeno ir seco,
Parmi, che tutto soffrirei con pace.(s*)

Allow it to be false, yet canst thou think
Barely to know that my Cresfonte wanders,
Will suffer me to harbour thoughts of joy?
Alone, an unexperienc'd, homely youth,
And unappriz'd of ways, customs and dangers,
Who has no place of rest, poor, and without
All hospitable succour, what for food
And where to lay his head, will he not suffer?
What want! how often to a stranger's table
Shall he approach? and humbly asking bread,
Perhaps be driven away; he, whose great father
Spread his rich table for such numbers. Then
Should he fall sick, as that he may too easy,
Whose care will he then be? low on the ground
When he shall languid lay, afflicted, left,
A draught of water, none shall hand it to him.
O Gods, might I at leaft but travel with him,
I think that I should suffer all in peace.

MR. AYRE.

(s*) As the author acknowledges to have received considerable aid from his mother in th composition of this tragedy, it may be presumed, that the fine description of materna sufferings which we have quoted, was written under her direction. His little tribute o gratitude to that amiable lady, merits transcription. Having introduced the name of Sylvi in *Sc.* 4. *Att.* iv. he thus apologises for using a name which "non è greco."—"Un' im proprietà è qui nel nome di Silvia, che non è greco: ma l' autore ha voluto in ogni mod metterci il nome della madre sua, quasi per gratitudine, avendo da essa imparati, e presi al quanti passi de' più gratiti di questa tragedia." *Annotaz. p.* 135. What a beautiful trait i our author's character, does this apologetic passage disclose!

No

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No

Nor is Egistus's picture of rural felicity less highly fi- SECT. III.
ished.

Mio pastoral ricetto,
Mio paterno tugurio, e dove sei?
Che viver dolce in solitario parte,
Godendo in pace il puro aperto cielo,
E della terra le natie ricchezze!
Che dolce sonni al sussurar del vento,
E qual piacer sorger col giorno, e tutte
Con lieta caccia affaticar le selve,
Poi ritornando nel partir del sole,
A i genitor, che ti si fanno incontra,
Mostrar la preda, e raccontare i casi,
E descrivere i colpi!

O pastoral recess! paternal cottage!
Where! where art thou! How sweet is it to live
In solitude, the pure and open heav'n
In peace enjoying, and earth's native riches!
Slumbers how sweet lull'd by the whisp'ring wind
What pleasure to arise with the glad morn,
And all the day pursue the chearful hunt,
At evening sun returning from the chace,
Meeting glad parents, then to show the prey,
Recount each accident and every stroke.

MR. AYRE.

But

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But this tragedy has been so often criticised, so often imitated,(*t*) and so frequently translated,(*u*) that the necessity of further dilatation upon it, is precluded. I shall only then add, that it was performed forty times during one carnival at Venice, and that it has already passed through sixty editions.(*v*) But we should not dismiss the Merope without observing, that it is one of the very few modern tragedies

(*t*) Upon the simple foundation of Maffei's Merope, Voltaire erected an elegant structure which will probably be one day deemed the most valuable monument of his dramatic power. Of Voltaire's tragedy, Aaron Hill published a spiritless translation, or rather feeble imitation to which he endeavoured to give an antique air by the intermixture of choral songs. To his Merope, Voltaire prefixed a letter of elegant criticism, and well-turned compliment, addressed to Maffei, on his drama. And shortly after the envious wit published a letter addressed to himself under the feigned name of Lindelle, in which he attacks all the vulnerable parts of the Italian tragedy with fiend-like malignity.

(*u*) Baretti, with an inaccuracy which often invalidates the authority of his *Italian Library*, says, the Merope of Maffei had the honor of being translated into English by Aaron Hill, and into French by Voltaire, *p.* 102. The only English translation of the Merope, at least the only one which, from its fidelity, deserves the name, is that of Mr. Ayre, *Lond.* 1740. But all the merit of this version, lies in its fidelity; for the blank verse, in which it is written, is so prosaic, that it is, in fact, only verse to the eye.

(*v*) *Stor. crit. de teat. tom.* vi. *p.* 133. Of the many editions of the Merope which have appeared in different countries, that of *London by Thompson*, 1720, *oct.* is considered by Baretti as the best. But I will confess I prefer the *Leghorn edition per Antonio Santini*, 1763, as it contains the various readings of the last edition of Verona, and all the different critical publications respecting the work, which have been published. The first edition of this celebrated tragedy is that of *Modena*, 1713, with a dedication to Rinaldo I. Duke of Modena. Amongst the literary treasures which enrich the magnificent library of the Earl of Charlemont, is the *Verona edition*, 1745, of the Merope, with marginal notes in the hand-writing of the author. To this edition are subjoined a French translation by M. Freret, and the English version of Mr. Ayre. This copy was presented, by the author, to Lord Charlemont during his residence in Verona, where his lordship's learning and accomplishments not only procured him the friendship of the Marquis Maffei, but the honorable distinction of a seat in the literary society which met occasionally in his palace.

which

which serve to show that Boileau was mistaken when he af- *SECT. III.*
firmed that

de l'amour la sensible peinture
Est pour aller au cœur la route la plus sûre.(w)

To win the public favor without the aid of love, at the time the Merope appeared, was a strong proof of the uncommon powers with which the mind of Maffei was endued: for it was about this period that LOVE INTRIGUE, after the example of the French, insinuated itself into Italian tragedy, and was then universally considered, not only as a charming novelty, but as a "necessary seasoning. The author of L' Arte rappresentative, published in 1728, notices and laments this innovation.

I gentili francesi hannovi intruso
La pulizia, l' amore, e tutte quante
Le novità, ch' io vò chiamare abuso.

But let us endeavour to trace the baneful innovation to its origin.—While the Italian tragic writers servilely followed the ancients, love found no place in their productions; for with the ancients it was a passion too gross for dramatic imitation. Amongst them the voluptuous union of two sympathizing souls was unknown. It was in the age of chivalry that the social

(w) *L'art. poet. ch.* iii.

intercourse

SECT. III.

intercourse of the sexes was first promoted under proper re-
strictions; and the passion which nature universally in-
spires, borrowed, in that romantic period, the language o
sentiment to express its feelings. In that age it was said, o
thought, that "l'amour n'est rien sans sentiment;" in fac
this passion then breathed such a spirit of platonism, that w
are almost induced to think its object was sometimes ideal
The age of chivalry had not passed away when Francis I
ascended the throne of France. This accomplished monarch
as a late writer observes, "gave a new air to literature by
mixing gallantry with it, and by producing the ladies at hi
court along with the learned." (x) Lovers now sighed i
a sonnet, or expired in a madrigal. And while the vanity o
the fair was flattered by hearing their admirers declare tha
their faces were as bright as snow, their pride was equally gra-
tified at being gently upbraided with having bosoms not less
cold. This was the empire of beauty. The fair felt thei
power, and exercised it despotically. From slaves they be-
came divinities. They exacted devotion, and were only to b
rendered propitious by the odour of incense. In this refined
state of society, (for refinement ever attends the influence o
the fair) the French stage arose, and the writers who sup-
ported it, pleased with the graceful air and polished manners
of the wily god, pressed him into their service. About a
century after, (the period under consideration) the Italian

(x) *Cat. of roy. and noble auth. vol.* i. Francis I. says M. Querlon, considered a court
without ladies, "une année sans printems, un printems sans roses." *Anth. Franç. tom.* i. *p.* 34.

dra-

dramatists imitated their example; and violation of proba- SECT. III.
bility, misrepresentation of life, and depravation of language soon after followed.

If Riccoboni was rightly informed, we have to lament the suppression of another tragedy by the learned and accomplished author of the Merope. "It is reported," says he, "that the same author (Maffei) has written another tragedy which is now locked up in his closet." It does not appear that this tragedy was ever published, but I trust it is not lost. Maffei's comedies, which first appeared in his Reforma del Teatro Italiano, were never admired, and are now forgotten. But though he has not succeeded in comedy, we find his muse sporting with elegance and ease in his Rime e Prose. In his Verona illustrata, he appears a profound antiquary; and in his Teatro Italiano, a compiler of jugment and taste. It does great honor to the city of Verona that it was not insensible to the various merits of this nobleman during his life. On his return after a short absence from his native city; he found his bust placed over the principal entrance to the philharmonic academy, with the following inscription on the pedestal:

MARCHIONI SCIPIONI MAFFEO VIVENTE, ACADEMIA PHILHARMONICA DECRETE ET ÆRE PUBLICA. ANNO MDCCXXVII.

His modesty taking the alarm, the bust was removed at his earnest desire. But it was restored to its pristine situation on his death. It still stood in the year 1792. And as I

SECT. III.

learned against a pillar in the portico of the museum reflecting, with gratitude, on the many obligations which the lover of Italian literature have to the taste, genius and industry of the marquis, (x*) my eye was attracted by the following inscription:

MARCHIONIS SCIPIONIS MAFFEI, MUSÆI VERONENSIS CONDITORIS, PROTOMEN AB IPSO AMOTAM, POST OBITUM ACADEMIA PHILARMONICA RESTITUIT, ANNO MDCCLV.

With the death of Maffei it may be supposed that the article devoted to him should close. But to the lovers of the Italian drama nothing which relates to the Merope can be uninteresting. I shall therefore offer no apology for observing here, that the part of Merope was first performed by Elena Balletti detto Flaminia (y) the wife of Luigi Ricco-

(x*) In a letter addressed to Maffei by Muratori, a few days before his death, he denominates him "il campione più vigoroso e coragioso della letteratura in Italia." *Vita di Muratori. Nap.* 1773. *p.* 169.

(y) She was born at Ferrara in 1686. Her son Antonio Francesco Riccoboni, who was many years a favourite actor, was born at Mantua in 1707, and died in Paris, in 177[illegible]. His wife, Marie Jeanne de la Borras, who quit the stage in 1760, is well-known by her romances of Catesby, Amélie, Jenny, le Marquis de Gresey, Sancerte, Sophie de Vallier[illegible] Butler and Rivers. Translations of some of those productions swell the catalogue of English novels.

In regard to the real name of the celebrated Flaminia, there are various opinions. In calling her Elena Balletti, I follow De la Lande, and the editor of the posthumous works of the Abate Conti; but Quadrio says, that her true name was Agata Calderoni. Concerning her "nom de guerre," there are, however, no doubts; the names of Lelio and Flaminia, are inseparably united in the page of history. At the invitation of the duke of Orleans, these celebrated performers entered into the service of the French court in the year 1716; and in 1723, a pension of fifteen thousand livres was settled on them by the king of France.

bor-

poni detto Lelio, the Roscius of his age, and the author of L'Histoire du Theatre Italien, and several other works. This lady was not only celebrated as an actress of considerable merit, but as a writer of some excellent comedies and an ingenious dissertation upon theatrical declamation. She was perfectly acquainted with the Latin lauguage, and not totally ignorant of the Greek; and "sapeva al fondo," says an Italian author, "l' arte della poesia drammatica." Rousseau speaking of this lady, in a letter to her husband, says, "je connoissois de plus mademoiselle Flaminia, votre illustre épouse, pour une personne distinguée parmi ce qu' il y a de plus scavant en Italie." But while we are doing justice to the wife, let us not forget the husband. When Pietro Cotta quit the stage in disgust, Riccoboni found himself raised to the head of his company, without any body to support him. "I stood alone," says he, "trembling at the recollection." Alarmed at his situation, he consulted the Marquis Maffei. "Call up the horrors of our old tragedies," said the literary veteran. The experiment was tried and succeeded. And for ten years after, the Sophonisba of Trissino, the Semiramide of Manfredi, the Torrismondo of Tasso, and the Cleopatra of Delfino, kept possesion of the stage in Venice, and in all the principal cities of Lombardy. At the same time, says Riccoboni, "je donnai la Merope du même Marquis Maffei: on ne sçauroit exprimer le bruit qu' elle fit, et les

SECT. III.

SECT. III.

applaudissemens qu'elle reçût; il s'en fit quatre editions dans la même année."

Tempted, probably, by the success of Maffei's Merope, Nicola Francesco Haym, a Roman, who resided in London during the reigns of queen Anne and George I. published a tragedy, on the same subject. Haym was also author of another tragedy, (la Demodice); of an unsuccessful attempt at an history of music, on a good plan; (y*) and a Biblioteca Italiana (z) which has been unmercifully pillaged by Barretti. But as the dramas of this author have eluded my enquiries, and as he seems to be remembered rather as a musician than as a poet I shall not disturb his repose. Sir John Hawkins ascribes to Haym, the introduction of the Italian opera into England.

Soon after the Merope of Maffei, appeared the Demodice of Giambatista Recanati, a Venetian gentleman, and the Didone of Giampieri Cavezzoni Zanotta a Bolognese. The first was represented, with great applause (1720), in Modena, Ferrara and Venice. And the Didone was published in Verona (1721), dedicated to the marchioness Isotta Nogarola Pindemonte, (a) This tragedy is praised for its regularity,

(y*) *Hawkin's Hist. of music, vol.* v. *p.* 167.

(z) This useful work was published both at Venice and at Milan in 1741. But I am ignorant of the year in which either the Merope, or Demodice first appeared.

(a) It should perhaps be observed, that the chorus is excluded from the Demodice of Recanati and the Didone of Zanatti, as well as from the Merope of Maffei. This observation will be found to apply, with few exceptions, to all the secular tragic dramas which appeared in Italy after this period. Maffei defends, with learning and ability, his rejection of the chorus, in his annotations on the fourth scene of the first act of the Merope, in the elegant edition of that tragedy printed at *Verona*, 1745.

for

for the vivid colouring of the passions, and for the beauty of the style; but the author adhering too strictly to the construction of the ancient tragedy, clears the stage in only two instances, "La sceneggiatura," says Signorelli, "è pure alla maniera antica; ma due volte sole resta il teatro vuoto." How admirably has this subject been treated by Metastasio! Anxious to meet the wishes of his favourite Romanina, every faculty of his soul was employed upon his Didone abbandonata. If therefore it be not, as has been said, the most elaborate of his operas, it is certainly one of the brightest effusions of his genius. Such is thy "so potent art" O Love! —Here let me again take occasion to lament, that a genius capable of such an effusion, should have been wasted upon mere lyric compositions; and that the powers of such a mind should have been shackled by the trammels of music.—Divine bard! if thy meek spirit still hovereth over this sublunary sphere, extend thy guardian care to the accomplished Briton who has lately raised a monument of elegant structure to thy name! (*b*)

In the same year with the Didone appeared the Ezzelino of Girolamo Baruffaldi of Ferrara. In taking a subject from the annals of his own country, Baruffaldi stepped into a path heretofore but little frequented, though

(*b*) See *Memoirs of the life and writings of the Abate Metastasio. By Charles Burney. Lond.* 1796.

more

SECT. III. more likely to lead to fame than the beaten track of mytho logy. In the tyrant of Padua he found an hero

Damn'd to everlasting fame,

in the Inferno of Dante, (*c*) and affording, from his eventfu life, a fine subject for the tragic muse. But he seems to hav succeeded better in his Giocasta la giovane (1725). In thi tragedy the pathetic separation of Antigone and Osmene i the fifth act, is much admired, particularly the following lines:

Dille del mio destin la cruda istoria,
Dille che la sua madre al fin morio
Tradita e invendicata: e se al mio petto
Stringer non la potrò, stringila al tuo.

But the Ulisse il giovane of Domenico Lazzarini di Morr of Macerata soon eclipsed the tragedies of Barruffaldi. I this tragedy the author is said to have happily imitated th *Œdipus* of Sophocles, "richiamando sulla scena," says Sig norelli, "tutto il terrore e la forza tragica del teatro Ate niese." If by "terrore and forza," Signor Signorelli mean a combination of shocking circumstances, certainly the dra ma under consideration merits the eulogium he has bestowe

(*c*) *Canto* xii.

E quella fronte, ch' ha 'l pel così nero,
E Azzolino.

Some of the most interesting particulars of the life of this sanguinary tyrant, may be foun in *Istor. Fior. di Machiavelli. Lib.* i. *Miscell. works of E. Gibbon. vol.* ii. and M. de Clairfon valuable notes on his translation of the Inferno. *L' Enfer. Floren.* 1776. Eccelin owes h first introduction upon the stage to Mussato.

upo

upon it. For the hero is made to marry his own daughter, murder his son, extinguish both his eyes with the tongue of a buckle, and then wander an outcast, bereaved of his senses, and haunted by spectres and furies. And all this happens, not because he is stained with any horrid crime, but because the gods would have it so: he is thus cruelly visited for the sins of his ancestors. SECT. III.

Lui perseguon l' Erimi,
Fin dal suo nascimento,
Non per colpa di lui,
Ma per colpa dell' avo.

The moral of the piece is thus delivered by the hero himself:

Impareranno omai
Col mio misero esempio
Que', che con vera frode, e virtù finta
Calumnian le dottrine,
E i costumi degli úomini innocenti,
Se nella terza discendenza ancora
Cade il fulmine.(*d*)

If this tragedy be intended as a remedy for the disorders of the passions, according to the Aristotelian prescription, it must

(*d*) The fable of this tragedy seems to have been constructed in the true spirit of the horrid superstition of ancient paganism which, as the admirable translator of Eschylus observes, often impelled even the most religious persons to actions that were shocking to humanity, and at the same time left them exposed to infamy and punishment, as if they had been voluntarily guilty." *Trag. of Esch. translated by R. Potter. Lond.* 1779. *vol.* ii. *p.* 22.

indeed

SECT. III. indeed be allowed to be a violent one: in fact it belongs t that class of dreadful tales which, as they only give anguis to the reader, can never do good; they fatigue, enervate an overwhelm the soul; and when, as in the present case, th calamaties which they describe are made to fall upon the in nocent, our moral principles are in some danger of a tempo rary depravation from the perusal. (*e*) Conti, who, as well a Baretti, praises the style of this drama, very justly observes that "la passione dello spettatore già consumata per la morte data dal padre al figliuolo, più non si risveglia per quella dell morte, che a sè dà la figliuola." (*f*)—This tragedy first appeared in Padua (1719) without the division of acts or scenes but it was printed in Ferrara the following year, with the usual divisions and properly adapted to the stage. A few years after (1724) it was admirably parodied by Valarezzo, a nobic Venetian. In this PARODY (*g*) (the first that appeared in the Italian language) Maffei's Merope, as well as the tragedy of Lazzarini, is happily ridiculed, and the author occasionally levels his shafts, barbed with humour and pointed with satire, at the Greek tragedies.

(*e*) For this just and ingenious remark, I am indebted to Dr. Beattie. *Ess. on Poet. and M. p. ii. ch. 7.*

(*f*) The fault which Corti reprehends in the Ulisse il giovane, prevails too universally in the modern Italian tragedies. We have formerly noticed it, in speaking of the Tancredi of Caruppi, see note (*o*).

(*g*) This parody entitled il Rutzvanscad, il giovane, was republished in Venice in 1743, in the *Venezia Trionfante*. And in *Observations sur la comedi. Paris* 1736, both the original tragedy and the parody are analized.

Dominico

Dominico Lazzarini, was elected professor of Eloquence in the university of Padua in the year 1710; a situation for which, if we may credit the editor of his works, he was highly qualified. He recalled, says he, "le buone lettere dal loro esilio, restituiti gli studj all' antico splendore, e scossi dal niscro e vergognoso letargo gl' ingegni Italiani." Of the year in which Lazzarini was born I am ignorant. Nor have any of his various productions reached me, except this tragedy which we have just reviewed, his acute Osservazioni sopra la Merope, and the following sweet

SEC. III.

SONETTO

AL SEPOLCRO DEL PETRARCA.

Ecco dopo due lustri, o cigno eletto,
Dove il tuo frale in un bel sasso è accolto,
Torno, ma bianco il crin, rugoso il volto,
E de l'antico amor purgato e netto.
Ma se de la mia fiamma il freddo petto
Più non s'accende, e à pensier tristi è volto;
Non però del tuo stil leggiadro e colto
Meno mi maraviglio, o mi diletto.
Che quel foco onde ardesti, alma gentile,
Tanto a quest' anni miei par dolce e bello,
Quanto più la ragion de' sensi è schiva.
Oh fosse stato il mio sempre simile!

SECT. III.

Che dove or temo, in compagnia di quello
Andrei lieto e sicuro a l' altra riva.(*b*)

Two lustres now are past, and I return,
Sweet swan! with furrow'd cheek, and silver hair,
To where thy sacred relicks fill the urn,
With heart at length releas'd from amorous care.
What tho' my wonted fires no longer burn,
And thoughts of gloomiest cast my bosom share,
Yet not with less delight thy page I turn
Nor yet to wonder or to praise forbear.
For that pure flame that warm'd thy gentle breast,
Now more seraphic to my age appears,
As now the senses yield to reason's sway.
O had my bosom been by such possest!
In that secure, and freed from all my fears,
Joyful to other worlds I'd wing my way

Lazzarini was one of the few Italian poets who ventured t
build a tragedy upon a subject of pure invention. Neithe
he nor Tasso seemed to think with Brumoy, " que la tragédi
ne peut souffrir de sujets feints;" and I accord in opinio
with them. For, as Dr. Blair observes, it is proved by expe
rience, that a fictitious tale, if properly conducted, will incl

(*b*) This Sonnet is preserved in the splendid edition of *Le Rime del Petrarca*, published
1756, by Antonio Zatta, a spirited printer of Venice.

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the heart as much as any real history. "Accordingly," he con- SECT. III.
tinues "some of the most pathetic tragedies are entirely fic-
titious in the subject, such as Voltaire's Zaire and Alzire,
the Orphan, Douglas, the Fair Penitent, and several
others."(i) But when a fancy, like that of Lazzarini, is apt
to run riot, it requires the awful restriction of historic truth.

"L'Elettra del conte Gasparo Gózzi, which was printed
in 1758, may cope with the Torrismondo of Tasso," says
Baretti. Stimulated by this eulogium I sought for Gozzi's
Elettra. I found it, read it, and was not disappointed. The
character of Orestes is admirably supported. And insanity,
resulting from the horrors of a guilty mind, is capitally de-
scribed in the last scene.

Ore. Cessate, fiere Eumenidi,
Cessate; ah! ch' io conosco
Qual braccio, che vendetta
Del parricidio prende.
Deh, non ferite ancora,
Ancora non ferite.

(i) Aristotle, who is allowed to legislate despotically in almost every department of literature, does not ordain, that tragedy should be invariably founded on received fables or historic facts: he even acknowledges that tragedies of which the incidents and characters are equally feigned, do not fail to give pleasure. When Horace says,

Ex noto fictum carmen sequar,

he only means to recommend a known subject, from the difficulty of keeping up to nature and probability in subjects of our own invention.

Oimè, ch' io veggo,
Che Clitennestra
Ne vien con voi.
Essa vi stimola
A non far conto
Delle mie grida, o del mio pianto amaro.
Al suo furore
Ecco inasprite.
E la sua voce
Vie più v'accende.
Madre, raffrena alquanto ira sì grave;
Perchè se' tanto al tuo figliuol avversa?
Umilmente t'abbraccio le ginocchia.
Non isprònar contra il tuo figlio Oreste
Queste tremende dee. Tu non m' ascolti?
Oimè, tu aggiungi sdegno; e tu le infiammi
A far la tua vendetta.
Ah! ch' ella stessa
Infuriata mi s' avventa incontra.
Ella stessa. Ove fuggo? Ella m' è addosso.
Ahi, ch' io son morto.

Cease, relentless furies,
O cease; methinks I know
That arm already rais'd
To deal dread vengeance on the parricide.
Oh, strike not yet,
Spare, o spare me yet a while.

Alas, I see
My mother's vengeful shade
Attends your steps.
Her voice,
Her furious mien,
Add fuel to your rage.
Mother! restrain thy dreadful ire.
—Why this wrath against thy son?
Humbly I embrace thy knees.—
Incense not these tremendous powers
Against thy once lov'd son. You hear me not!
Alas, you spurn at me, and urge them on
To vengeance.
Ah, she herself
Infuriate, leads the charge.
'Tis she! 'tis she! Where shall I fly? She is on me!
Would heaven my death were nigh.

After a slight interruption by Electra, the frenzy of Orestes is renewed, still dwelling on the same idea, and occasionally exhibiting pathetic strokes that reach the heart. At length the wretched paricide sinks, exhausted; and a moral reflection of Electra concludes the piece. If Gozzi has evinced uncommon poetic fire in the madness of Orestes, he has shewn equal judgment in the shortness of its duration. For, "when madness has taken possession of the person, such character ceases to be fit for the stage, or at least should appear

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pear there but for a short time; it being the business of the theatre to exhibit passions, not distempers."(k)

Of an author endued with such powers, I should have been glad to have learned some particulars; but my enquiries were not attended with success. That he was "letterato e dottissimo," I am willing to think with Goldoni; and that he was a voluminous writer I cannot doubt, for his works in six volumes octavo, now lie before me, containing Tragedie Comedie, Cantate, Lettere e Rime serie e piacevoli. With the lighter effusions of his pen, I have nothing to do; but I shall briefly notice his serious dramas. Besides the Elettra which we have already considered, I find amongst our author's works, the following tragedies, Marianne, Zaire, Edipo and Medea; and three rappresentazione, l'Antiochia, Isaccio and Marco Polo.

Marianne and Zaira are free translations from Voltaire. As the well-known story of Œdipus has received neither embellishment nor injury at our author's hands, I shall only just observe, that it has two choruses which form the crowd of supplicants prostrate at the foot of the altar, which renders the opening of Sophocles' tragedy so solemn and so magnificent. The rites performed, the choruses retire with the priests, and only appear occasionally afterwards. They sing no odes, and their leader, except in a single instance, is silent throughout the piece. Not finding my attention arrested

(k) *Post. to the Myst. Mother.*

by any striking beauties in this drama, I shall pass to the Medea. SECT. III.

In ev'ry clime, where learned muses reign,
The ſtage hath known Medea's mournful ſtrain;
Hath giv'n the flying car, and magic rod,
To her, th' avowed deſcendant of a god.

A mythological story rendered thus familiar, was rather a bold than an happy choice. However our author by adding the tender—the fearful Creusa to his dramatis personæ, has given a new interest to the fable. If his drama be not equal to that of Euripides upon the same subject, it is certainly infinitely superior to the Medea of Seneca, though the Latin poet seems to have put forth all his strength in this piece, particularly in the incantation of the divine enchantress. Mr. Glover too must yield the palm to the Italian bard. Widely departing from the ancient drama, Signor Gozzi rejects the chorus; Mr. Glover affecting the Greek model, gives choruses; but from the want of rhyming metre, they disappoint the ear, and from the too frequent absence of poetic fire, they seldom soothe the fancy.

L' Antiochia was undertaken with the laudable view of opening "una via, che gia fu calcata con tanta magnificenza da' Greci, e che potrebbe oggidì somministrare al teatro quella grandezza, ch' esso ha perduta affatto." This "via," was the total omission of love-intrigue. The experiment did not succeed; at least the thinness of the audience at the second

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and third representation induced the author to think so, an he withdrew his play. In the advertisement prefixed to thi drama, Gozzi attributes the paucity of spectators to the in clemency of the weather. "La perversità della stagione, says he, "impedì alle genti l' andare a' teatri."

'Isaccio is founded on a story drawn from the annals o Venice, the author's native country. In this drama h takes occasion to pay a compliment to his countrymen, whic I am willing to suppose, would apply to himself. Enric his hero, says,

In un Veneto sono ogni altro affetto
Vincon la fè promessa, e la costanza.

Marco Polo, the famous Venetian traveller is the hero the piece which bears his name. In this drama the stage constantly crowded with Indians and Tartars, all of who occasionally speak very good Italian.

De la Laude mentions a translation of the death of Ada from the German of Klopstock by Gozzi, which is not in cluded in any edition of his works that I have seen. (*n*) can only account for this omission by supposing, that, our au thor had failed in his attempt at transfusing the simple beau ties of the German tragedy into his translation. Perhaps to the sublime horrors which invest Klopstock's angel of death

(*n*) Tom. viii. p. 246.

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vanished at the touch of our author's pen.—To the edition of Gozzi's works which lies before me, and which was printed in Venice in 1758 (*n*), an head of the author is prefixed, engraved by Bartolozzi in the bold manner of Edelink; a manner no longer practised by that incomparable artist.—Carlo Gozzi, the comic poet, so warmly praised by Baretti in his letters on Italy, was the youngest brother of our author. But Signora Bergalli, the wife of Gaspero, has a better claim to our notice from her excellent translation of Madame du Boccage's tragedy of the Amazones. (*o*) This lady also

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(*n*) *Appresso Bart. Occhi.* A new edition of Gozzi's works, in eight volumes octavo is now printing in Venice, under the direction of the Abate Dalmistro. A life of the author by Tindemonte, is to be prefixed.

(*o*) The remerciement of Mad. du Boccage to Signora Gozzi, is so happily turned, that I am tempted to transcribe it.

Pour chanter les filles de Mars,
Melpomene monta ma lyre;
Sur mes foibles sons la satyre
Vainement lanceroit ses dards.
Aux rivages adriatiques
Une amazone d'Hélicon
Eternise en vers Italiques
Mes guerrieres du Thermodon.
Son talent chéri d'Apollon
Rend mes chants dignes du Parnasse,
E conduit au sacré vallon
Mes heroïnes de la Thrace.
Quel prix peut payer tes faveurs,
Muse, qui vers le Pô m'appelles?
Les honneurs dûs aux immortelles,
De l'encens, des vœux et des fleurs.

 trans-

CT. III. translated Terence's comedies "with as much elegance" [illegible] Baretti, "as Madame Dacier did into French."

In 1761 appeared, under the Arcadian name of Lauriso Targiense, twelve tragedies in four volumes quarto, by Padre Giovanni Antonio Bianchi. Of these dramas eight are in prose, viz; Don Alfonso, [illegible] Matilde, Tommaso Moro, Demetrio, Marianna, Dina, and Ruggiero;—and four in verse, Atalia, David, Gionata and Virginia. Neat, judicious, and regular, but wanting that depth of interest and vigour of style so essentially necessary for a public theatre, they have been confined to the teatrino, or little theatre yet existing in the convent of Orvietto, for which they were originally written. Two comedies by Bianchi are still inedited. Having indulged with Melpomene, and sported awhile with Thalia, our author entered the lists with Giannone, the profound historian of Naples. Losing in this combat some of his laurels, he again turned his thoughts to the stage, and published a work entitled De' vizj e de' difetti del moderno teatro. Bianchi was born in 1688 and died in 1758.

Italy now abounded in votaries of the tragic muse offering their *firstlings*. Amongst those of whom history condescends to give even a simple list, I distinguish Count Ludovic Savioli, a senator of Bologna; a writer who has since risen to eminence in the literary world, and whose warm and sprightly Amori entitle him to the appellation of the Anacreon of Italy. Respecting, as I do, the talents and virtues of Count Savioli,

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and once honored with his acquaintance, I am happy in transcribing the following eulogium on him by Metastasio. In a letter to Farinelli dated 18th of July 1765, he says, "by the infinite esteem which I have long felt for Count Savioli, the favourite of the muses, I have always done myself more honor than him. I beg of you to represent to him my lively sense of his partiality." The Morte di Achille, which entitles the count to a place in this work, I have not seen. But his love-breathing Amori now lie before me. (*p*) In his dedication to the Duchess of Bracciano, he thus speaks of himself and of these early effusions of his muse. "L'ambizione non m' ha certamente condotto a scrivere. Ho cominciato a farlo in una età predominata da una passione più necessaria, più funesta, e più cara. Ma almeno se a questa ho saputo resister poco, mi lusingo di poterini defender meglio dall' altra." As the little poem of il Teatro bears some affinity to the nature of this work, I had originally intended to give it as a specimen of our author's poetic levities; but I am induced to yield its purposed place to a sonnet by the ingenious Count, of which my friend Mr. Boyd, the admirable translator of Dante's inferno, has favoured me with a translation.

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(*p*) This edition, which was printed with elegance at Bassano in 1789, is embellished with a portrait of the author. Another edition appeared in 1790, with La Faoniade of Signor Imperiali, the reputed author of a delicious little romance, on the Greek model, entitled, Le Avventure di Saffo, poetessa di Mitilene.

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SONETTO,

Sul sepolcro di Dante Alighieri.

E qui lontano dalla patria ingrata,
Onde concittadino odio t'escluse,
Giaci straniero peso. A la gelata,
Pietra angusta mi prono, che ti chiuse

Ma deh ne l' ardua via per te segnata,
Deh primo alunno de le tosche muse
Dimmi, e pur ver che Beatrice amata
Fu la tua scorta, e 'l dolce stil t' infuse ?

E s' è pur vero, o padre, e s' io discerno
Chiaro ne' carmi il tuo bel foco antico,
Colei qual era, e con che forza amasti ?

Ardo anch' io da molt' anni ; oggetto a i casti
Voti è una dea ; ma con chi piango, e dico !
Dorme il cenere sacro un sonno eterno.

Far from proud Tuscany's ungrateful soil,
Here sleeps thy corse, by civil hate expel'd,
Poor emigrant ! by thy chill tomb awhile
I'll lay me down, where rest thy bones conceal'd.

But in that arduous path by thee explor'd,
Prime foster-child of Arno's tuneful choir,
Say, did thy love a guiding hand afford,
And wake in other worlds thy vent'rous lyre ?

(g) The biographers of Dante are indebted to Count Savioli for the discovery of a decree, by which the father of Italian poetry was condemned to be burnt alive !

As

As yet, O father, in thy living strains
I mark the fervor of thine antient fire,
Where, deathless as her charms, thy passion glows,
Like thee, I burn, and breathe my fruitless vows,
To one whose fate awakes my plaintive lyre;
Her sacred dust eternal sleep detains.

I find history dwelling with great complacency on Alfonso Varano, a nobleman of Camerino, who died, loaded with honors and with years, in 1788. His Demetrio, Giovanni di Giscala and Agnese are known to all lovers of the drama. But the Giovanni di Giscala is rendered most interesting by the nature of its subject: it rolls on the destruction of Jerusalem, a circumstance upon which no christian can reflect with frigid indifference. This tragedy was published, with great typographical splendour, at Venice in 1754, and each act adorned with engravings of medals struck in honor of Titus and Vespasian. Not many years after, it was represented in the college of Reggio; and I have heard a student of that college, who was present, express much delight at the recollection of the music with which the chorus that concludes each act, was accompanied. The chorus, he observed, took no part in the dialogue, but stood at the lower end of the stage until the act was concluded; and then advancing, sung irregular odes of a moral tendency.

The Demetrio, "qui passe," says De la Lande, "pour une des meilleures tragedies qu' on ait en Italie," appeared

in

SECT. III. in Padua in 1749, adorned also with engravings, which ar better executed than designed. In this tragedy the chorus as in the former, takes no part in the dialogue, only filling up the intervals between the acts with odes which contribute nothing towards the advancement of the main action. In the preface we are told, that the author "non l' ha voluta priva de' cori al fine degli atti, come da' Latini, e prima da' Greci si costuma." A chorus thus idly looking on during the progress of the action, seems merely intended for scenical embellishment, or to give a classical air to the piece, and might therefore be lopped off as an excrescence, in the representation. (r) I have observed several choruses written or introduced, apparently with the same view, and which, it is probable, the authors never intended should be either "sung or said."(s)

The choral songs, however, in the Agnese (t) are not of that nature: they are addresses to the deity in behalf of the

(r) In the Alvida of Giacomo Cortone, (*Pad.* 1615) the coro di donzelle cantatrici, do not take any part in the dialogue, nor do the odes which they sing at the end of each act serve either to link, or to promote the main action: but in *atto* i. *sc.* 6. they warble a soft air for the purpose of attuning the princess' soul to love; a circumstance which must have a happy effect in representation. This tragedy (which has little else to recommend it to our notice) was, we are told, written, during the government of Vicenzo Capello, in Udine; a city in which letters once flourished under the auspices of the academia degli Sventati.

(s) Some of the choruses in Tasso's Aminta are short poems, or madrigals borrowed from his Gioje di rime e prose. See Manage's valuable ed. of the *Aminta*, Par. 1736. p. 53. Of the same nature are the choruses in the Clitia of Machiavelli. And I have reason to think, that on a careful examination of the choruses of several Italian tragedies, it would be found that Melpomene has often pressed fugitive pieces into her service.

(t) *Parma, Dalla Stamperia reale*, 1783.

expiring

expiring martyr. In the first, strength to endure the agonies of the cross, is entreated: In the latter, a petition for the passing soul is offered. The scene of this drama is laid in Japan, a circumstance which affords the author an opportunity of exhibiting a striking picture of customs and manners unknown before on the Italian stage. The heroic fortitude of S. Agnese is well supported; and her reasons for "the faith that is in her," are powerfully urged. The tender affection of Neita serves to soften the horror of the catastrophe And the luminous appearances which are either seen or described, descending on the house and cross of S. Agnese, heighten the interest of the piece by seeming to manifest the divine interference. This, as well as the other dramas of our author, is printed with great elegance, in quarto, and adorned with engravings, one of which represents the martyrdom of the heroine. SECT. III.

In 1769 died the celebrated jesuit Giovanni Granelli, chaplain and librarian to the Duke of Modena, whose tragedies of Sedecia, Manasse, Dione, and Scila figlia di Jefte, are ranked by his countrymen with the Merope and Demetrio. They seem to dwell with marked delight upon the beauties of those tragedies; but as I have already exceeded the limits originally prescribed to this essay, I shall not pause to partake of their pleasure. I shall only extract a passage from the Sedecia in which the deity is thus made to speak:

Chi

Chi son io, dice Dio, che in ti Egitto
Anzi che in me, le tue speranze affidi?
Quella forse è la terra, onde l'aiuto
Debba sperar salute, e quelle l' armi,
Che di me non curando, a del mio tempio
In sua difesa infedelmente volori?
Perchè a sottrarne i voti antichi padri
Colà fec' io tanti prodigj orrendi?
Perchè poi da l' Egitto un dì sperasse
La casa di Giacob salvezza e regno?

Surely Denina could not have seen the last of these tragedies when he lamented, that the author was debarred, by the rules of his society, from the introduction of female characters? If the laws of the private theatre of the jesuits were so unfriendly to female characters, as Signor Denina represents them to have been, the daughter of Jeptha certainly tempted Granelli to violate them. Having never inspected this tragedy; I am not prepared to offer an opinion on its merits; and the analysis of Signorelli is too slight to be satisfactory. From this analys's I only learn, that the author has heightened the distress of Scila's "tale of tears" by giving her a lover.(*u*) This lover has been lately borrowed by the author

(*u*) This subject was probably suggested to Granelli by l'opera de Jephte, which appeared in Paris in 1732, and which was "la premiere tragédie sainte qui a été représentée sur le theatre de l opera depuis son établissement." *Hist. de theat. de l'acad. roy. de Musiq. tom.* iii. *p.* 120. *Par.* 1757. In the French opera, as well as in the Italian tragedy, the daughter of Jeptha has her lover.

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of a drama on the same subject, which was performed, a few years since, in Naples.—A select collection of the works of Granelli appeared in Modena, 1772, under the title of, Poësie scelte del padre Giovanni Granelli della compagnia di Gesu. De la Lande ranks our author with the best tragic poets of Italy. SECT. III.

The Abate Saverio Bettinelli now demands our notice. His Gionata, Demetrio Poliorcete and Serse re di Persia, have been honored with the warmest applause, particularly the pathetic lamentations of Saul in the Gionata, and the following patriotic sentiment in Demetrio:

Dolce e morire per la patria, tutto
Per lei versiamo il sangue, ella su noi
Piangerà, benchè tardi; a questo prezzo
Dal fiero eccidio ella compasse almeno.

In the Serse is introduced a ghost whose appearance is described in a manner not inferior to the celebrated description of the spirit of Loda in the Death of Cuchullin.(x*)

Un lamentevol suon parmi improvviso
Da lunge udir che più s' appressa: io veggio
Fra una pallida luce in quel momento
Terribile apparir mesto fantasma,

(x*) See Ossian's Poems.

Bende funeree a vedovili panni
Tutto lo ricoprian: celava il volto
Lugubre velo; per le man traea
Tutto sparso di lagrime un fanciullo,
Io tento di fuggir ma non so dove. . .
In quello un pianto, un gemito dolente
Mi raddoppia il terror, ode, o udir parmi
Il fatal nome risonar d' Amestri.
Mi volgo, e la ravviso; ella era desso,
Che squarciatasi il velo, ancor le belle,
Ma confuse sembianze a me scopriva.
Io correr voglio a lei, ma ignota forza
Or mi trattiene, or mi respinge, e miro.
Ch' ella stringeva insanguinato ferro,
E al garzone il porgea. Parmi vederla,
Parmi ascoltarla ancor, che tra i singhiozzi
Ignoti sensi mormorava, e il nome
Di Dario ripetea.

All on a sudden lamentable screams
Were heard deep swelling on the startled ear,
And onward, with augmented clamour, came:
Then, rising in a pale and dubious light,
A ghost appear'd in majesty of woe. . .
Sepulchral fillets, and the sable stole
Of widowhood, she wore. A beauteous child
Whose cherub face was all with tears bedew'd,
She led,—I meant to fly, but try'd in vain.

Laments more loud and deeper groans were heard
That froze my blood, and fetter'd every limb.
Sudden, methought, I heard the fatal name
Amestris,—round I turn'd, with steadfast gaze,
Resolv'd on certainty,—'T was she herself!—
Rending her veil, those lineaments divine
Dawn'd on my sight, tho' dimly yet descry'd.
I struggled to approach her, but in vain;—
Fetterless arm withheld me,—yet I turn'd
Again to gaze,—and lo! a gory blade
Brandish'd by that fair hand, and at the breast
Aim'd of the lovely boy! I saw her threat;
I heard her loud complaints, in mingled sighs
Half lost; and yet by intervals I caught
The name of great Darius.

After reading this passage, we are not surprised at hearing the Roman reviewers(*u*†) confess, that the perusal of the Serse " ha prodotto nel nostro cuore quel terrore, quella compassione, e tutta quella commozione di affetti, che sì di raro si ottiene in tanta quantità di tragedie, che abbiamo lette, o vedute rappresentare." The Serse was first (1767) represented in a private theatre in Verona. The principal character was performed by the Marquis Albergati Capacelli. The other dramas of our author have been repeatedly represented in the public theatres of Venice, Parma and Bologna. His trans-

(*u*†) *Efem. Letter. di Roma for April*, 1772.

SECT. III. lation of Roma Salvata, which was printed at Bassano in 1771,(u‡) has been also well received on several stages in Italy.

Saverio Bettinelli was born, in the year 1718,

Presso a la riva, ove il bel Mi
Coronato di salici, e di canne
Feconda il culto e lieto suo pacse

Entering early into the order of the Jesuits, he abandoned for awhile, his native country; but when M. De la Land visited Mantua in 1769, he had returned, in order to devot the remainder of his life to the service of those muses wh had smiled propitiously on his birth. "Si quelqu'un peu rappeller à Mantoue le souvenir de Virgile," says this en lightened traveller, "c'est M. l'Abbé Bettinelli, autrefois jé suite, et qui est revenue dans son pays." In 1769 our autho published in Milan "un ouvrage plein d'imagination et d gout," says M. De la Lande, entitled Dell' entusiasmo dell belle arti. His poem against the Raccolte, which appeare

(u‡) In the same year (1771) a complete collection of his dramatic works was published i Rome, with "una cantata per la venuta dell' imperatore a Roma." To this edition is pr fixed, Un Discorso intorno al Teatro Italiano, ed alla Tragedia, in which the author lament that women are proscribed the stage of the order to which he belongs: "una madre, u sposa, una sorella, è molto più le amanti," says he, "exlandio le più saggie e più costumate s sebbene, scandalo e colpa—e quindi è chiusa per poi la sorgente più naturale degli affet umani più dilicati." This illiberal restriction on genius was, however, sometimes violated b the sons of Saint Ignatius.

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bout the same time, has been much praised. And his cele- rated letters to the Arcadian academy of Rome were so vell received in France, that a French translation of them ppeared at Paris in 1759.

About this time a crowd of translations of ancient and modern tragedies issued from the press in different parts of Italy, amongst which are particularly deserving of notice those of my learned and ingenious friend, the Abate Melchior Cesarotti; namely, the Mahomet and Cæsar of Voltaire. To these he added when I was in Padua (1792), the Semiramis of the same versatile genius. But whoever shall read the character of Cesarotti as drawn by Metastasio, must lament with me that he should waste his talents on translation. In a letter to his friend Mattei, Metastasio says; "I am extremely grateful for the valuable acquisition which your golden writings have procured me of so valiant, learned and celebrated a champion as the Abate Cesarotti; whose vast knowledge, sublime genius, and wonderful activity I have long admired in every species of pleasing and profound literature." Cesarotti has endeared himself to the lovers of the simple productions of our early bards, by his admirable translation of Ossian's Poems. And the admirers of Homer are equally indebted to him for the rich Italian garb with which he has invested the venerable father of epic poetry.

In 1772 the promise of a laurel crown by the sovereign of Parma, excited the exertions of the tragic muse. Amongst her

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her most successful efforts are enumerated the Zelinda (uu) of Count Calini of Brescia, and the Carrado and Rosmunda (uuu) of Francesco Antonio Magnocavallo; the Auge of Filippo Trenta, and the Valsei, ossia l'Eroe scozzese of Antonio Perabò of Milan, "giovane di alte speranze," says Signorelli, "morto qualche anno appresso." The first crown was adjudged to the author of the Valsei; the second to Filippo Trenta, a nobleman of Ascoti, whose translation of Gil Blas is much admired by his countrymen.

The Auge (uuu) seems to be only known in Italy; but the Valsei attracted the notice of an ingenious English critic, who, in the Gentleman's Magazine for March 1787, thus speaks of it. "This piece, says he, is curious, as founded on British history, which is rarely used by foreign poets; especially that of Scotland, upon which no other foreign drama occurs, except the Amelie et Monrose, recently acted with success at Paris. But besides that extrinsic quality, this tra-

(uu) *Parma*, 1772, 4to. & 8vo. It is observed by an Italian critic, that "tutto il piano la condotta, il nodo, e lo scioglimento" of the Zelinda, are taken from the Blanche Guiscarde of M. Savrin, "con qualche imitazione of the Tancrede and Sigismonda of Thomson. *Efem. Let. di Roma. ann.* 1772. Count Vincenzo Mangoli del Monte, author of the Bianca ed Enrico, (*Mod.* 1771), has similar obligations to those celebrated dramas.

(uuu) I transcribe, with pleasure, the following eloge on the author of the Corrado and Rosmunda. An ingenious critique on the Corrado concludes thus: Francesco Ottavio Magnocavallo, Conte di Varengo di Casal-Monferrato, author of this piece, is a "cavaliere pieno di merito, e chiaro riputato, amatore di tutti gli ottimi studj, e per mille virtudi e pregi morali caro al mondo, e benemerito della sua patria, la quale dee ringraziarlo ancora d'averla con una bella tragedia sua nazionale onorata." The Corrado was printed in *Parma* 1772 8vo.

(uuuu) *Parma*, 1774, 4to. & 8vo.

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gedy deserves the public notice, as being one of the best re- SECT. III.
gular tragedies, in five acts and blank verse, which Italy has produced during this century.—The plot of this tragedy," he continues, "is complete, having neither too much nor too little intrigue; and is as near historic truth as necessary. The amorous part is kept quite subservient; and is thus far superior to most French tragedies. The characters are well sustained. The sentiments just and fine. The language is simple, strong, and noble; and is every where free from any concetto, false thoughts, or false beauty. No wonder then (*v*) that this piece on representation gained 'la prima corona'." The following speech, breathing the spirit of Wallace, merits transcription.

Scozzesi illustri, valorosi eroi,
Del patrio regno a sostenere eletti
La contrastata liberta, di questo
Non sorse mai piu glorioso giorno;
Ne più lieto per noi. Riveste alfine,
Merce 'l vostro valor, la patria in oggi
Il suo splendor, la macsta primiera;
E l' anglo altier, tanto temuto un tempo
Più non osando a nuove prove in campo
La gloria espor delle Britanne insegne,
Di chi apprese a temer, comincia alfine

(*v*) Lest I should be accused of heedlessness, it is necessary I should observe, that this assertion of the ingenious critic, is not strictly correct.

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I dritti a respettar. Amico vostro
Or s' offre a voi; a voi la pace or chiedo;
Scuzzesi, e questo il sospirato istante,
Che di tant' anni i vigorosi sforzi
Deve alfin coronar. Quel zelo istesso,
Che la destra v' armo per sua difesa,
Col labbro mio da voi la patria implora
In questo dì, che stabil forma, e base
Al suo destin dovra fissar per sempre.

This tragedy issued from the royal press of Parma i
1774 (*v**)

At this time appeared several other tragedies which, if they do not evince much genius, are composed at least with art an judgment, viz; the Servio Tullio of Carlo Antonio Mont the Arsene and Giulio Sabino of Count Guglielmo Bevilacqua the Idameneo of Dottore Willi, and the Bfoll (*w*) of Coun Paolo Emilio Campi. The last of these, though posses sed of considerable merit, disgusts from its subject, lik the Phedre (*x*) of Racine, and that highly finished com position, The Mysterious Mother of Lord Orford. (*y*

Amongs

(*v**) 4to and 8vo.

(*w*) The story on which this tragedy is founded, was taken from Ovid, see *Metam. lib.* ix *fab.* xi. See also *Trionfi del Petrarca*, cap. ii. with the learned annotations of Bernard Lycinio, *Opere del Petrarca, Ven.* 1568. *fol.* p. 16.

(*x*) Racine, in order to reconcile his readers to his subject, tells them that in his dram "les passions n' y sont presentées aux yeux que pour montrer tout le disordre dont elles son carte."

(*y*) When it is known that Lord Orford deeply regretted the choice of his subject, I sha not, I trust, be accused of treating it with too much severity. But let us do the noble autho

rustic

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Amongst the canons of the stage there ought to be one proscribing the appearance of characters stained with the foul crimes of incest or adultery; for whenever the stage shall render such crimes familiar, it will cease to be a school of morality.—The Bibli first appeared (1774) in Modena, the native city of the author, and was represented, with great applause, in the private theatre of that court.

In 1778 appeared in Florence the Ulisse of the Marquis Ippolito Pindemonte of Verona, "acclamato," says an Italian critic, "tra' valorosi poeti viventi." In this tragedy the Greek simplicity is judiciously united with the bustle of the modern stage. To the Ulisse of Pindemonte, that of Francesco Franceschi, published in 1773, was obliged to yield the palm.

justice. The artful manner in which the plot of his tragedy is conducted, lessens, in a great degree, the danger attending the introduction of such a story upon the stage. Through the four first acts, we behold the contrition, and we admire the charities of the countess, but we are kept in ignorance of the enormity of her crime till the truth bursts from her, in a fit of insanity, in the last act. The shock is powerful,—the impression deep,—and the fall of the curtain leaves us to retire "full with horrors."

Having been induced to dilate, perhaps impertinently, upon The Mysterious Mother, I shall take this occasion to observe, that the fable upon which this inimitable tragedy is built, is minutely detailed by Bandello, (*Nov.* 35. *part* ii.) who heard it related by the queen of Navarre to his patroness, Costanza Rangoni e Fregosa. Bandello's novel is thus intituled: "Un Gentiluomo Navarrese sposa una che era sua sorella e figliuola, non lo sapendo." This story also appears amongst the tales of the queen of Navarre; but whether it was first given to the public by Bandello, or by her majesty, I cannot determine. Le prime tre parte delle Novelle del Bandello was published at Lucca, 1554, and the earliest edition of L'Heptameron of the queen mentioned by De Bure, (*Bibliog. Instruct. tom.* ii. *p.* 94. *Par.* 1765.) is that of Paris, 1560; but as the title-page of this edition adds, "remis en ordre par Claude Gruget," there was, probably, an earlier.

SECT. III. La Gibilterra, whose of this ingenious nobleman, has received its due meed of praise from the anonymous author of A Poetical Tour in the years 1784, 1785, and 1786.

— Pindemonte! thy liberal mind
Scorns to one spot to be confin'd,
Like Jove himself, thy piercing eye
Can virtue's every haunt descry,
To every shore, thy soul's unfurl'd
Poet and patriot of the world.

The same pleasing poet, in an epistle from Florence, after lamenting his having yielded to the soft allurements of pleasure at Venice, takes occasion to compliment the marquis on his tragedy.

Ah! now unlike to thee, whom still secure
In pleasure's lap fair science can allure,
Nor sure thy own Ulysses could disdain
The cup Circean, or the Syren's strain.

In the same year with the Ulisse of Pindemonte, the Catone of Giuseppe Maria Salvi met the public eye. This was the first time an hero of Ossian appeared upon the Italian stage.(a) But the author has failed both in truth of man-

(a) The Abate Cesarotti, following the example of Mr. Macpherson, has given the little poem of Comala a dramatic form, but without any change, I believe, of its introduction upon the stage, though he says that "adattata alla musica da un dotto maestro, e fregiata delle decorazioni convenienti, ella potrebbe essere un' opera di un nuovo genio, e far grande effetto anche ai tempi nostri." *Poes. di Ossian.* Padua, 1772. 8vo. t. i. p. 41.

ners,

ners, and of character. His heroes, though simple hunters in a rude age, speak the language and sentiments of the modern court. We need not therefore wonder that this drama did not succeed on the stage. Perhaps another cause of its want of success might be assigned; — it required eight different changes of scenery, an expence which the slender revenues of the theatrical managers of the day could ill afford. SECT. III.

In 1779 appeared anonymously at Bassano, Ugolino, Conte de' Gherardeschi. But the horror attending the circumstance of a man dying of hunger through five long acts, disgusted the readers and the auditors, and the play fell to the ground. It requires the genius of a Dante, or a Reynolds(k) to seize on the true pathetic point of time in this interesting story. Let us however do our unknown author the justice to declare, that the following lines cannot be read without emotion, Ugolino, dreading a demand from his sons for sustenance, exclaims,

V' udrò di nuovo
Chiedermi un pane, ne in risposta avrete
Fuor chè inutili lagrime e lamenti."

Nor are his expiring words wanting in pathos.—

Figli—Guelfo—ove siete? Ninо, io muojo,
E ti perdono.

(k) Perhaps Lydgate should have said Chaucer; who, in his tragedy of Hugoline of Pisa, has preserved all the pathos of this affecting story. See *The Monk's Tale*.

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In the same year the press imparted La congiura di Milano; and the Pentea of Alessandro Verri, under the modest title of Tentativi. These were followed by the Diluvio Universale, Anticristo; Andelasia in Italia, la rovina di Gerusalemme, Tomiri, Nabucco, [illegible] of Pedro Singhierlia, all full of tragic monstrosities, written in a vulgar style. These were succeeded (1787) by two volumes of Capricci teatrali, of which Gertrude Regina d'Arragona, Giulio Sabino in Roma, and Odoardo, are esteemed the best. Nor must we forget the Cleopatre of Scipione Cigala, though it has little to recommend it to our notice but the following quibbling distich to which it gave birth.

Scipio hic est; non is quo victa est Africa; at ille
Æternum pariet cui Cleopatra decus.

This distich, of which the point lies in a play on the christian name (Scipio) of Cigala, is preserved in the Drammaturgia, and attributed to Giuseppe Aurelio di Gennaro, a lawyer and latin poet of Naples.

In 1788 the senator Marescalchi of Bologna entered the lists with our Shakspeare, and received the palm from his countrymen. But not having read his Antonio e Cleopatra, it would ill become me to enter a demur against the decree. However I will confess, that from one passage in this tragedy which accidentally met my observation, I am not inclined to think very highly of the author's dramatic powers. While

Cleopatre

Cleopatra is in the temple expecting a visit from Augustus, she asks her maid, in the true spirit of a modern coquette, if her dress becomes her,—" se le sue vesti si accordino col suo volto." This question certainly ill accords with the circumstances under which it is asked. SECT. III.

In 1788 also the Baccanali, and the Coloni di Candia drew the public attention. And in 1789 the Agamemnon of Sophocles, and the Iphigenia of Euripides were again introduced upon the stage in an Italian dress.

Still Carlo I. re d' Inghilterra, by the Abate Giambatista Alessandro Moreschi of Bologna, kept the stage. On a people taught to behold, with reverential awe, the sovereigns of their little states, such a subject would naturally have a striking effect; and the amiable private virtues of the unfortunate Charles, must engage every feeling heart in his melancholy fate.(c) As a specimen of this tragedy, I shall transcribe Fairfax's advice to Charles. Atto ii. Sc. 5.

Hai tu vaghezza
Di grande tanto divenir, che alcuno
Pareggiar non ti possa? Ardisci, o Carlo,
D' alzare oltre te stesso il tuo pensiero?

(c) In 1652, three years after the death of Charles, we find Lorenzo Craso, the Draco of Italy, speaking of the fate of this prince as an event more deeply affecting than anything ever exhibited on the Greek or Roman stage. " Tragedia più lacrimabile non rappresentaron già mai le Thebane, le Romane scene, di quella di Carlo d' Stuard, re d' Inghilterra." Argument to the epistle entitled, Carlo Stuardo ad Hª Mª. di Borbone. See *Epist. heroiche di Lorenzo Crasso.* Ven. 1655.

Lo

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Lo scettro a te cagion di lungo affanno
Osa deporre, cittadin diventa;
Imita Silla, e sii maggior d' Augusto.

Perhaps too the reader would be pleased to see Cromwel drawing his own character under the direction of an Italian master.

Diadema non curo, o regia spoglia;
Voglio il commando. Alma non ho capace
Di servitù. Dovunque nato io fossi,
Io comandar dovea. L'utile nome
Di libertà, che si l' Inglese apprezza,
Qui mi chiama a regnar: altrove usato
D' altro consiglio avrei.

This tragedy first appeared in 1783.

Count Alessandro Pepoli, a native of Bologna also, an one of the brightest living ornaments of his country,(7) en tered the dramatic walk with the author of Carlo I. Thoug still a young man, seven tragedies have already fallen fro his pen. He boasts, and his productions justify the bold as sertion, that he was born a poet. "Posso vantarmi," say he, "d' essere nato poeta." It may almost be said he "lisp' in numbers;" for his little poem of Gli Amori di Zefiro Clori, appeared before he had attained his fifteenth year. I the year 1789, the royal press of Parma imparted with it usual elegance, his Tentativi dell' Italia, cioè Edulgi, Cleo

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nice, Irene, e don Rodrigo. These tragedies were so favou-
ably received, that he was induced to publish in Venice,
788, in five volumes, a complete collection of his dramatic
works, adding to the number of his former tragedies, la Ge-
osia snaturata, ossia la morte di don Carlo, Zulfa, Dara, il
epolcro della libertà, ossia Filippi, and Romeo e Adelinda.
t will be observed on inspecting the titles of those dramas,
hat in all except Cleonice and Filippi, the author has
bandoned mythological fables, and drawn his subjects from
nodern history. He has abandoned also the rigid form of
he Greek tragedy. In his Eduigi, it is true, there are cho-
al odes; but they are not performed by a stationary chorus:
he singers are, priests in the first act, soldiers in the second;
nd the female attendants of Elgiva in the fourth. But
hough he rejects the ancient chorus, he makes frequent and
dicious use of music, marking at the end of each act, the
haracter of the symphony which ought to be performed in
he interval. "Siccome io molto riconosco l'impero della
usica nel cuore umano," says he, "così ho stimato essen-
iale di non trascurare quello, che communemente trascurasi,
d è, che finito l'atto, nell' intervallo necessario al principio
ell' altro, non si coltivano col suono le impressioni ultime,
spesso sentesi un' allegrissima sinfonia succedere ai più dolo-
si trasporti. Così alla fine d' ogni atto, sì di questa (Cle-
nice) che dell' altre mie tragedie, ho indicato il carattere,
li 'io bramerei nella musica impresso." He also prefixes to

each

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each play, instructions for the actors;(d) an example de serving the imitation of all dramatic poets. He has, how ever, an advantage over the generality of writers for th stage: in his palace in Bologna,(e) as well as in that of hi brother in Ferrara, there is a private theatre, in which all hi pieces are represented before they are submitted to the publi eye; "affine" says he, "di potere rilevare io stesso nell' esecu

(d) See *Appendix No.* XI. Corneille, in his sensible *Discours des trois unités*, seems to r commend a similar practice. And Diderot says, that "the pantomime should be writte down, whenever it creates a picture; whenever it gives energy, or clearness, or connection t the dialogue; whenever it paints character; whenever it consists in a delicate play, whic the reader cannot himself supply; whenever it stands in the place of an answer; and almo always at the beginning of a scene," *Ess. sur la peint. dram.* To the want of the pantomim much of the confusion and obscurity which prevails in many passages of the ancient dra matic writers may be attributed. Nor did their imitators, the early Italian tragic poet supply this defect in their productions. But the Marquis Maffei has subjoined to each of th ancient tragedies which he has rescued from oblivion, an "Avvertenza per recitarla." Se *Teat. Ital.*

(e) The palace of our author is a large and splendid edifice. "Le palais Pepoli," say De la Lande, "où a logé le grand-duc de Toscane, et la reine de Naples avec toute le suite, sans même que les maîtres fussent délogés." *Voy. en Ital. tom.* ii. *p.* 330. From th following inscription in this palace, it appears, that the Pepoli family deduce their origi from a king of England.

IOANNES ALVERDI VI. REGIS ANGLIÆ FILIUS FAMILLÆ FUNDATO
CCMLXXII.

It was probably this circumstance which directed our author's notice to the history of th Anglo-Saxons, when he first sought a subject for the exercise of his dramatic powers. Be whatever the origin of the Pepoli family may be, it certainly took an early and importan lead in the political concerns of Bologna. This we learn from a letter "touchant le fait d Comte de Pepoly," addressed by Henry II. (of France) to Sieur D'Urfé, in *Mem. d' Etat par G. Ribier. tom.* ii. See also *La Secch. rap. cant.* v. *st.* 56. in which

Il buon Conte Romeo Pepoli vecchio,

is introduced, and the arms of the family described.

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tione i luoghi o mancanti, o deboli, o superflui." To this practice may be, perhaps, attributed some of his happy situations, and his great knowledge of stage-effect; a knowledge in which he has been seldom surpassed. From the prefatory discourses prefixed to his dramas, we may learn his dramatic creed. Aristotle he does not believe infallible, therefore he sometimes ventures to violate the unity of place. He loves, he declares grand catastrophes, and terrible events. "Non mi piace d' interessarmi per metà," says he.—We shall now proceed to the consideration of his respective dramas.

Eduigi is a fine composition, and, though the author's first dramatic essay, conducted with all the skill of an experienced writer for the stage. The character of Dunstan is true to history.(*f*) While he affects the saint, he acknowledges, under the specious pretext of candour, the indiscretions of his youth.

Sempre canuto
Io già non fui. Di passioni ree
Conobbi anch' io la forza, e fui da queste
Spesso indotto a fallir; ma non mancommi
Nel mio Signor la speme.

(*f*) As to the authenticity of the fact upon which this drama is founded, the author says, he could cite "i polverosi nomi di vetuste e cronicche ed istorie;" but "mi contenterò" he continues, "di citare Hume nella sua d' Inghilterra." Hume seems to have been not only his authority, but his guide; and his only important deviation from the clear and simple narrative of the English historian, is in the manner of Elgiva's death, which he very properly thought not "adattabile al teatro." The queen, says Hume, "was hamstringed; and expired a few days after at Gloucester, in the most acute torments." *Hist. of Eng.* vol. i. p. 122.

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The speeches of this meddling priest, and those of Odo archbishop of Canterbury, breathe the spirit of the church in the tenth century. The lovely,—the tender,—the enamoured Elgiva is inimitably drawn. And the account of her violent separation from Edwy, and of her abode in a shepherd's hut in Ireland, is natural and affecting.

The invitation which Pausanias sends to Cleonice, in the tragedy which bears her name, is justly censured for its indelicacy; and in the conduct of her father on the occasion we lose sight of probability.

Irene, o sia il delirio dell' Eroismo, is a splendid tragedy and one of the most successful productions of the author. Irene's character exhibits an highly finished picture of pure, disinterested love, incapable of disguise, but alive to filial piety, and obedient to the voice of a father. Mahomet is brave, noble, and generous; and when he plunges the dagger into the breast of his mistress, he shares our pity with the lovely victim of his subject's displeasure. All the situations in this piece are conceived and managed with great felicity: the last scene in the third act is, in every respect, a chef-d'oeuvre. The language is every where appropriate, and highly poetical,—perhaps that of Mahomet and his followers might have been a little more figurative.(f*

(f*) De la Noue, in his Mahomet II. has succeeded, where Pepoli seems to have failed. There is in his style, as a French critic truly remarks, "un vernis oriental très-convenable à son sujet."

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We may, however venture to assert, that if the Iroche of our author be not a better poem, it is certainly a better play than the drama of Dr Johnson on the same subject. SECT. III

In I delitti dell' onore, o sia D. Rodrigo re di Spagna, the character of Clotilde is admirably supported. A prey to a variety of passions, she "grapples with our attention," to the moment of her fall. Grateful to her queen, enamoured of her king, she struggles with a passion which she is conscious she ought not to cherish, and, in order to escape guilt, determines on monastic seclusion. Made privy to a conspiracy against Rodrigo, her tender bosom becomes the scene of a contest between love and filial duty.

Ah, quai modi ti fingi? Invan, Gosvinda,
Tutto farei: tutto è compiuto, ovunque
Lo destini la sorte: o Don Rodrigo,
O il padre mio le vittime saranno.
Ambi son cari a questo cuor, lo vedi.
Don Rodrigo è il mio re. Del figlio ad onta
Il suo tenero amor merta pietade;
E l' ottenne da me, benchè mi sforzi
A finta crudeltà la mia virtude.
Il padre, il padre, oh dio! troppo m' adora:
Col suo delitto di servirmi ci crede,
L' accieca l' ira, il suo destin l' accieca.
Tremo per lui. Deggio tremar dovunque
Ei nella colpa, o nella pena incorra.
Che farò, sventurata?

SECT. III. Love triumphs, and she falls its victim. If we should not subscribe to the opinion of the author that

fra le colpe
La più degna di scusa è alfin l' amore;

we must, at least, pay the tribute of a tear to the fate of Clotilda. Inflamed with jealousy, Egilona is "una tigre," thirsting after the blood of her husband, and the friend whom she occasionally presses to her breast. In the conduct of this piece there is little to censure till we approach the end, when the arbitrary restriction of five acts obliges the author to hasten his catastrophe. In sc. 6, atto 5, Rodrigo takes a cold leave of his queen, and retires to rest. Almost immediately after, he is roused from his sleep by the cries of Clotilda, who perishes by a sword which the queen has obtained,—we are not told where. Rodrigo rushes from his chamber, and is stabbed by Giuliano, who suddenly repents,—relinquishes the hand of the queen,—declines the throne, and then boasts of the honor of a Spaniard:

L' onore
Quanto non può d' uno spagnuolo in seno!

Dara, which is founded on a Turkish subject, is pronounced, by an enlightened critic, rather "un tessuto di colpi di scena cioè di fatti, che di situazioni tragiche." But in the Sepolcro della libertà, it is the opinion of Signor Signorelli, that

that "Marco Bruto vi comparisce degnamente, e se non potrà compararsi col Catone dell' Addison, non manca di sublimità e di forza."

La Gelosia snaturata, o sia la morte di Don Carlo,(*ft*) was written in emulation of the Don Carlo of Alfieri. The catastrophe of this tragedy is produced by the violation of historic truth: the prison in which Carlo is confined, falls, and he, and Elizabeth are buried in the ruins.

Romeo e Adelinda (*ft*) is founded upon an interesting event in the annals of Florence. This tragedy was represented (1788) in the private theatre of the Marquis Albergati near Bologna.(*g*) The part of Uberto was performed by the Marquis,(*b*) that of Adelinda by Signora Teresa Venier; and in the

(*ft*) This tragedy was reprinted (1792) by Bodoni in *Parma*, 8vo. under the title of "Carlo ed Isabella."

(*ft*) An elegant edition of this tragedy, entitled Adelinde, appeared in *Parma*, 1791. 8vo.

(*g*) This theatre is in the hall of the palace, which Mr. Wright considers one of the noblest halls he has ever seen. It has a portico at each end, with pillars of the corinthian order which support a gallery above. On each side is a sort of vestibulum (the ceiling painted in fresco) which has an open passage each way. Through these and the portico, you may go quite round the hall, which goes up to the top of the house. *Trav. vol.* ii. p. 445.

(*b*) Goldoni praises the talents of the Marquis Albergati both as an actor, and as an author. "Questo signore notissimo nella repubblica letteraria per le sue traduzioni di molte tragedie francesi, per le buone commedie fatte da lui, e più ancora per la stima che ne faceva il Signor Voltaire, indipendentemente dalla sua scienza e dal suo genio, aveva i più felici talenti per la declamazione teatrale, e non vi era in Italia comico, nè dilettante, che rappresentasse al pari di lui gli eroi tragici, e gli amorosi nelle commedie." *Mem. del sig. Goldoni*, tom. ii. p. 119. Dr. Burney was much pleased with a comedy entitled Il saggio Amico, by the Marquis, which he saw performed in the theatre of Brescia. "It was," says he, "the first

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the character of Romeo, the author himself is said to hav displayed great theatrical powers.

Having been thus led to speak again of the SCENIC EX HIBITIONS of the Italians, I hope I shall be excused if should here dilate a little upon that interesting subject Mention having been already made of the sylvan and mo nastic theatres, it only now remains to notice, with the bre vity consistent with my plan, those theatres which wer erected for private amusement in the palaces of the nobilit and gentry, and for public use in the principal cities.

Before the time of Palladio, the public and private theatre of modern Italy seem to have been designed without skill o taste, and constructed rudely and inelegantly. Nor was th scenery less rude than the edifice. Instead of painted scenes rural views were represented with trees made of silk: an idea first conceived by Girolamo Genga, and carried into execu tion by him in the theatre appertaining to the polished cour of Urbino,(*i*) a court which once concentrated all the wit an

first (comedy) which I had ever seen in Italy without a Harlequin, Colombine, Pierro, an Dottore: it was more like a regular comedy than the Italian pieces usually are." *Pres. Stat of Music in France and Italy*, p. 118. Voltaire sent (1760) a copy of his Tancrede to th accomplished nobleman who is the subject of this note, accompanied with a letter in whic he extols the prevailing practice of private plays in Italy, not only as an elegant amusement but as a protection against ennui. A translation of the Tancrede was undertaken, and, I believe, executed by the Marquis Albergati.

(*i*) *Ess. on the Opera. By Count Algarotti. Eng. trans. Lond. 1767. p. 74.*

talents

talents of Italy.(k) But this fairy-scene vanished at the magic touch of the pencil. Tempted by the hopes of gain, or urged by the desire of meeting the wishes of their respective patrons, we find some of the great painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, condescending to afford their aid. Vasari praises the scenery painted by Baldassarre Peruzzi for the Calandra of Bibbiena: "quando si recitò al detto papa Leone la Calandra, commodia del cardinale di Bibbiena, fece Baldassare l' apparato, e la prospettiva, che non fu manco bella, anzi più assai, che quella, che aveva altra voltra fatto; ed in queste sì fatte opere meritò tanto più lode quanto per un pezzo addietro l' uso delle comedie, e conseguentemente delle scene, e prospettivo era stato dismesso, facendosi in quella vece feste, e rappresentazioni. Baldassare," he continues, "fece al tempo di Leone X. due scene, che furono maravigliose, ed apersero la via a coloro, che ne hanno poi fatto à tempi nostri."(l) When preparations were making in Mantua for the pompous reception of Charles V. Giulio Romano appeared amongst the artists employed on that occasion, painting "prospettive per commedie." And there remained

(k) See that inimitable little work, *il Cortegiano del conte Castiglione. Ly.* 1553. *p.* 10. Montaigne describes the ducal palace of Urbino, but passes over in silence, the theatre. See his *Voy. en Ital. (tom.* ii. *p.* 100.) a curious and interesting narrative written with all the naiveté, and elaborate detail of an old chronicle.

(l) *Vite de pittori. tom.* iii. *p.* 328. See also *Hist. de l'opera. tom.* i. *p.* 12. *Par.* 1757. Vasari likewise extols the scenery painted by Gio. Antonio Lappoli, for a comedy which was recited (1534) at Arezzo, in the presence of the Duke Alessandro de' Medici. *tom.* iv. *p.* 452.

not

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not long since in the monastery of la Carità in Venice, a wooden theatre designed by Palladio, and decorated by the pencil of Zucchero, the second Raffael of Urbino.(m) But with Ferdinando Bibiena began the triumph of scenic delusion. "He was the inventor of those scenes," says Algarotti, which by the novelty of the manner, drew the eyes of all the curious upon him."(n) Architecture keeping pace with painting, the structure became worthy of its decorations. The teatro Olimpico produced many imitations, and Scamozzi, who completed it, was often employed to execute the chaste designs of his great predecessor Palladio. But Scamozzi was not a servile imitator: he sometimes dared to think for himself, and the little private theatre of Sabbioneta is an existing proof of his capability of thinking like a man of genius. The happy talents also of Giacomo Torelli appear in the theatre of Faunus; and the noble theatre of Parma, is a splendid monument of the abilities of Giambattista Aleotti.(o) Even poets

(m) This flattering title is bestowed on Zucchero by Arnaldi, in whose valuable *Raccolta* we find a sonnet in praise of his talents, by Mario Verdizzotti, beginning

Mentre a la dotta man di Frederico
La muta poesia si move, e spira
In bei colori, &c.

(n) *Essay on the Op.* "Les deux Bibiena, célèbres architectes, et fameux peintres," says Riccoboni, "actuellement vivan, ont fait voir à toute l'Europe par leurs superbes decorations, que sans machines on pouvoit orner un theatre; non seulement avec autant de magnificence, mais encore avec plus de vraisemblance qu'avec des machines." *Reflex. sur les theat. de l'Europ.* p. 35.

(o) It has not yet been discovered by what happy art this theatre was so contrived "that, (to borrow the words of Addison) from the very depth of the stage the lowest sound may be heard

poets too threw aside their lyres, and, taking up the rule and compass, furnished designs for theatrical edifices. The plan for the theatre erected at Ferrara in the palace of Alphonso Duke of Este, was an effusion of the brilliant and versatile genius of Ariosto, for the exhibition of whose comedies it was purposely raised; and the theatre of Verona was erected under the direction of the Marquis Maffei, author of the tragedy of Merope. The latter remains a monument of Maffei's taste; but the former was consumed by an accidental fire while Ariosto lay on his death-bed.(p)

Soon after the revival of the dramatic art, a passion for theatrical amusements spread itself throughout Italy.(q)

heard distinctly to the farthest part of the audience, as in a whispering place." *Rem. on several parts of Italy.* Lond. 1718. p. 334.

(p) "That very night that he (Ariosto) sickned and tooke his bed, there happened a great mischaunce that was, in the opinion of most men, a presage of his death. The goodly hall that Alfonso had beautified, with the most sumptuous stage that had been seen in Ferrara, (purposely for Ariosto's comedies) was fiered by mischaunce, and consumed a great part of the Duke's pallace beside." *Life of Ariosto* by Sir John Harrington, subjoined to the translation of the *Orland. furios.* Lond. 1591.

(q) This passion has penetrated even the wilds of Calabria. Mr. Swinburne gives a ludicrous account of a dramatic representation at which he was present at Francavilla, in the year 1780. "In the evening," says this enlightened traveller, "I was entertained with the tragedy of Judith and Holoferues, acted by the young people of the town, in a theatre belonging to the castle. Their rude accent, forced gestures, and strange blunders in language, rendered their dismal drama a complete farce. When the heroine murdered the general, the whole house shook with thundering bursts of applause; the upper part of his body was hidden by the side scenes; the lower parts lay on a couch upon the stage, and in the agonies of death were thrown into such convulsions, kickings, and writhings, as melted the hearts and ravished the souls of the attentive audience. Judith then came forward, and repeated a long monologue, with her sword in one hand, and a barber's block, dripping with blood, in the other." *Travels in the two Sicilies*, vol. ii. p. 33. Lond. 1790.

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Theatres, both public and private, arose in every city and in every town. Each academy had its theatre; and the grand salle in every palace was fitted up for dramatic exhibitions.(r) Nor has this passion yet expired. All the great and small towns in Italy still abound in private theatres and dramatic exhibitions are the favourite amusement of the Italian gentry and nobility of the present day during the villeggiatura. The brother of Count Pepoli, whom we have just mentioned, as well as the Marquis Albergati, have each un teatro stabilito, that is, a company of players and a band of music, which are considered as component parts of their household establishments. However neither these gentlemen nor any of the other proprietors of private theatres in Italy refuse to take a part occasionally either on the stage, or in the orchestra. We have already found both the Marquis Albergati and Count Pepoli performing in Romeo and Adelinda; and Count Vittorio Alfieri, whose works we shall shortly notice, played the part of Creontes in his own tragedy of Antigone.

(r) "The Pastor Fido," says Gibbon, "was first represented in a private house in Ferrara. In the year 1792, I explored the apartment in which it was exhibited. It was then stripped of all theatrical decorations. It appeared spacious and gloomy. Of its dimensions I cannot speak with certainty;—perhaps I should approach near the truth if I were to say, it is thirty feet in length, and eighteen or twenty feet in breadth. This apartment is in an house which formerly belonged to the Guarini family, but is now the property of the Gualengi. On the stairs leading to it, stands a bust of the poet Guarini. And on the front of the house we read the following inscription:

HERCULIS ET MUSARUM COMMERCIO,—FAVETE LINGUIS ET ANIMIS.

Were

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Were I to notice particularly the several public theatres of Italy, I should extend this digression to an unreasonable length. I shall therefore confine myself to observing, that those which are most celebrated, are the following;—the theatre in Parma erected by Giambattista Alcotti and dedicated (1619) to Bellona ed alle muse,—that of Verona erected, as we have already observed, under the direction of the Marquis Maffei,—the royal theatre of Turin which, according to De la Lande, "est le plus considérable qu' il y ait en Italie, à l' exception du grand theâtre de Parme, qui depuis long-temps ne sert point,"—the Aliberti of Rome,—San Petronio of Bologna,—San Carlo (s) of Naples, and the Fenice of Venice. I happened to be present at the opening of the last theatre, in May 1792, and never did I behold a more brilliant spectacle. (t) All the powers of music, painting and dancing were employed to strike and delight the imagination. Nor was it a little gratifying to an admirer of Shakspeare, to see the bust of his favourite bard placed in a colonnade amongst the greatest ancient and modern dramatic poets.

It should, however, be observed that the public theatres which I have enumerated are, in general, solely appropriated

(s) Though this theatre is dedicated to Saint Carlo, it is on Saint Anthony the manager relies for protection against fire; and with this view, an image of that Saint, as black as the late lady of Loreto, stands behind the scenes.

(t) It was with the opera of i Giccochi d' Agrigento by Count Pepoli, that this theatre was opened. The libretto, which lies before me, is adorned with a view of the front of the theatre, and portraits of the principal performers,—Gasparo Pachiarotti, Giacomo David, Brigida Banti,—and the composer of the music, Giovanni Paisiello.

SECT. III. to the representation of musical dramas by companies of comedians in the pay, and forming part of the establishment of their respective courts. Comedies and tragedies are now performed in Italy by istrioni or strollers only, to whom the royal stage, or theatre of the court, is universally proscribed. The admirers of Thalia and Melpomene divested of the meretricious charms of music, must therefore be content to seek those ladies in such humble theatres as the Capranica and Tordinona of Rome, S. Crisostomo of Venice, the Fiorentini of Naples, and the small theatre belonging to the palace of the prince Carignano in Turin. It is to this want of a permanent theatre, liberally endowed, that the slow progress of tragedy in Italy has been, with too much truth ascribed. It was observed above a century ago by Rymer, that "Italy had no fund for the vast charge of dramatic representations; they had no standing revenue for the theatre; and however magnificent some prince might be on an extraordinary wedding, or great occasion, there was nothing constant, nor could it, in such circumstances, be expected, that the drama there should turn to account, or rise to any tolerable reputation. Therefore the ordinary business of the stage was left amongst a company of strollers, who wandered up and down, acting farce, or turning into farce, whatever they acted." (*u*) The evil complained of by the English critic, is feelingly deplored

(*u*) *A short view of Trag.* Lond. 1693. p. 53.

by

by Denina. (v) And Ranieri de' Calsabigi, in his celebrated letter to count Alfieri, (x) having cast a retrospective glance upon the Italian stage, asks, "But what kind of stages were "there?" To the question he replies: "Sometimes theatres "belonging to the court, but most commonly to private no- "blemen, who caused them to be erected in their palaces and "villas. Upon these temporary stages, select tragedies were "represented a few times by the courtiers of the prince, or by "private parties of ladies and gentlemen. Thus Italy hav- "ing never had a permanent tragic theatre, or actors by pro- "fession, these private representations could only be called "transient attempts, from which the art received little or no "advantage."

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Though jealous in the extreme of the honor of his own thea- tre, Voltaire declares, "si jamais les Italiens avaient un théâtre régulier, je crois qu'ils iraient plus loin que nous. Leurs théâtres sont mieux entendus, leur langue plus maniable, leurs vers blancs plus aisés à faire, leur nation plus sensible. Il leur manque l'encouragement, l'abondance, et la paix." But I trust they will not long want either "l'encouragement," "l'abondance," or "la paix." And we may safely conclude with Dr. Burney, that "when they become heartily tired of music, which by excess of it they will probably be very soon, the same rage for novelty, which has made them fly with such

(v) *Le Vic. della Litt. cap.* v.

(x) *See Trag. di Vitt. Alfieri. Par.* 1788. *tom.* 1. The public are indebted for an excellent translation of Calsabigi's letter to Mr. Penn, from whose version I have borrowed the pas- sage given in the text.

rapidity

SECT. III.

rapidity from one stile of composition to another, will driv
them to seek amusement from the stage *without* music." (y
Nor is it improbable that, from the natural ardour of th
Italian character, and the resources with which the nationa
language and genius abound, Italy, ere many years roll away
will surpass the rest of Europe in the dramatic, as well as i
the other arts. Rapt with this idea, methinks I now behol
Melpomene reigning in simple majesty in that enchanting
country, while "le beau monstre de l'opera," warbling an ex
piring note, lies prostrate at the foot of her throne!

Returning from this digression, I shall select from th
few tragic writers that still remain unnoticed, two of superio
merit, and devote the concluding pages of this memoir to th
consideration of their respective productions.

Impatient of the tedium of an inactive life, and nobly am
bitious of fame, Count Vittorio Alfieri of Asti, while yet
youth, struck into the dramatic walk. "Ciò che mi mosse
scrivere da prima," says he, "fu la noja, e il tedio d' ogn
casa, misto a bollor di gioventù, desiderio di gloria, e neces
sità di occuparmi in qualche maniera, che più fosse confacent
alla mia inclinazione." Such was the ardour with which h
engaged in this new pursuit, that he produced, in less tha
six months, a tragedy entitled Cleopatra, (z) which was, h
candidl

(y) *Pres. stat. of music in Fr. & Italy. p. 208.*

(z) This drama still remains inedited. The amours of Anthony and Cleopatra, seem t
have been a favourite subject with the dramatic poets of Italy, from the dawn of their mag
to the present time. We have had occasion, in the course of this work, to notice several tr
gedi

ndidly confesses, what might be expected from his ignorance nd presumption,—"un mostro." Yet this play, he informs s, was twice represented on the public stage in Turin where, sia detto a vergogna degli uditori non meno che dell' autore," t was not only heard and tolerated, but even applauded. Thus suddenly transformed, to use his own words, from a dis- ipated youth into a tragic author, he determined to endeavour t qualifying himself to support his new character. In order o this, much was to be done. He had little Latin, but no Greek,—was totally ignorant of English,—and had paid so ittle attention to the cultivation of the Italian language, that is knowledge of the "pura lingua toscano," was "presso he all' *abbicci.*" He therefore thought it necessary to abstain rom his favourite indulgence,—the perusal of French au- hors,—and devote himself to the study of the best Italian vriters with a view to acquiring the means of clothing his deas in a suitable garb. He did not, however, neglect the

edies entitled "Cleopatra." The first Italian poet who treated this subject dramatically as, I believe, Giraldi Cinthio, who at the desire of Hercules II. Duke of Ferrara, built pon it a tragedy, which was to occupy six hours in the representation; thus was the poet ompelled, by the imperious dictates of his patron, "to bestow all his tediousness," on the udience. The comic poets were less unreasonable in their demands on the time and patience f the spectators; at least Cecchi only required two hours and a half for the representation of is Incantesimi, a comedy in five acts.

vi voglion' nobilissimi
Spettatori, trattener con una favola
Due hore e mezo.

book

SECT. III.

book of nature; indeed he must be allowed to have studied it with uncommon success. He seems to have explored, with the inquisitive eye of genius, all the recesses of the human mind, and to have noted with anxious care, the workings of the passions in all their various modifications. Hence the power which he acquired over them. But however ardently he might have laboured to attain the mastery of his vernacular tongue, he undoubtedly failed in the attempt; for even in his most elaborate works, his diction is harsh, inelegant, and sometimes, ungrammatical. "Peccato," says an Italian critic speaking of the beauties of our author's tragedies, "che tante gemme siano state legate in piombo, che col suo tristo coloro abbate ed infievolisce il loro stupendo splendore." His language, nevertheless, is nervous and appropriate; in fact, in his "hoarse rough verse," we often hear a mighty voice, at whose pealing sound rice stands appalled.

In the construction of his dramas our author departs from the ancient model. He rejects the chorus, and is heedless of the unities. Sparing of confidants, he abounds in monologues. And from mismanagement of his situations, he often fails in illusion. Still, however, his genius predominates; his dramas, with all their faults, seldom fail to produce the intended effect.

We shall now proceed to enumerate his dramas, offering occasionally, as we advance, such observations as may occur. The arrangement which we shall follow, is that of Didot's elegan

elegant edition of our author's works, in six volumes octavo. (a)

SECT. III.

Il Filippo.—The character of the Tiberius of Spain is finished with the strong and masterly touches of Tacitus. From him, as Signor Ranieri de' Calsabigi observes, (b) we hear "suspensa semper, et obscura verba;" in him we see a man "sine miseratione, sine ira:" and we always find him "obstinatum, clausumque, ne quo affectu perrumperetur." Isabella is ingenuous, incautious, and deeply enamoured. Carlos is unsuspicious, impetuous and dauntless. In the manner of the death of Carlos, and that of Isabella, the author departs from history,(c)—(if the delightful Nouvelle Historique of the abbé de Saint-Réal deserves that name); and he ceases to be true either to history, or to nature when he makes Philip insist on the suicide of his son in his own presence.

Il Polinice.—The characters of Polynices and Eteocles are drawn with strength and truth. One serves as a foil to the other. But perhaps the hand of the master is no where more evident than in the death of those unhappy brothers. Eteocles, affecting to embrace Polynices, takes that

(a) *Parigi da torchi di Didot maggiore; e si trova presso Gio. Cl. Molini, libraio,* 1788.

(b) *Ibid. tom.* i.

(c) *Oeuvres de l'abbé de Saint-Réal. Amst.* 1740. *tom.* iii. *p.* 147. Alfieri's deviation from history in the manner of the death of Don Carlos is, at least, pardonable, if not judicious: though a man bleeding to death in a bath, may afford a good subject for the painter or the sculptor, it is totally unfit for representation on the stage.

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SECT. opportunity to stab him; and the last word uttered by Poly
III. nices is,—forgiveness!

Eteo. Son vendicato. Io moro;
E ancor ti abborro—
Pol. Io moro;—e a te perdono. (*d*)

This event acts so powerfully upon the mind of Jocasta, en feebled by accumulated sorrows, that it produces insanity.

Cioc. Di morte i negri
Regni profondi spalancarsi io veggio—
Ombra di Lajo lurida, le braccia
A me tu sporgi? a scellerata moglie?—
Ma, che miro? squarciato il petto mostri?
E d' atro sangue e mani e volto intriso,
Gridi vendetta, e piangi?—oh! chi l' orrenda
Piaga ti fe? Che fu quell' empio?—Edippo
Fu; quel tuo figlio, che in tuo letto accolsi
Fumante ancor del tuo versato sangue.—
Ma, chi altronde mi appella? un fragor odo,

(*d*) This affecting event is coldly described by Creon in la Thebaide of Racine. (*act* v. *sc.* 3.) Nor has Eschylus ventured to bring it into action. In the fragment of a tragedy, o the same subject, by De la Noue, Antigone relates the particulars of the fatal conflict betwe her brothers, and adds

Je tombe, et dans mes bras la Parque les devore.

But this was not the first occasion on which De la Noue declined giving an example "de verser le sang d'un autre sur le theatre," because he thought it an "example dangereux, qu degenéreroit bien-tôt en habitude de carnage, et qui, d'un spectacle innocent et regulier, feroit en peu de tems une aréne sanglante, une école d'inhumanité." *Pref. au Mahom.* ii.

Ol.

Che inorridir fa Dite: ecco di brandi
Suonar guerriero. O figli del mio figlio,
O figli miei, feroci ombre, fratelli,
Duran gli sdegni oltre la morte? O Lajo,
Deh! dividi tu.—Ma al fianco loro
Stan l' Eumenidi infami!—Ultrice Aletto,
Io son lor madre; in me il vipereo torci
Flagel sanguigno: A questo il fianco, è questo,
Che incestuoso a tai mostri die vita.
Furia, che tardi?—Io mi t'avvento . . .

Jocasta faints;—Antigone exclaims

Oh madre!

and the piece concludes. A poet less acquainted with human nature, would have made Antigone deliver a long speech on the occasion.

L' Antigone.—The want of vraisemblance in the first scene of this tragedy, is justly censured. Argia, a young princess, wanders alone at night, into the country of an enemy, in order to find Antigone, whom she does not know, and to obtain from her the ashes of her husband. But the author makes ample amends for this offence against probability, in sc. 2. atto. ii. In the same act is a moral sentiment, which cannot be too strongly, or too universally impressed:

Il reo
D' un delitto è chi 'l pensa.

SECT. III.

La Virginia. The [illegible] in this drama are such as might have been found in Rome,

While Rome surviv'd

It would seem to have been written amidst the ruins of the capitol. The author, however, fears he has not done justice to the Roman character. "Quando questa tragedia verrà rappresentata ad un popolo libero, si giudicherà che in essa il popolo Romano non dice e non opera abbastanza; e si dirà allora, che l'autore non era nato libero. Ma, rappresentata ad un popolo servo, si dirà per l'appunto l'opposto." Scene 2. Atto iii. is highly finished: it is, as Signorelli observes, "vigorosa." But the necessity of extending the play to five acts, has enfeebled the fourth.(e) This is candidly acknowledged by the author: "Virginia," says he, "non ha quart' atto."

L' Agamennone. Too proud to follow servilely the Greek tragedian, our author has omitted Cassandra, and thus deprived his piece of a most interesting character. For this omission, however, he makes ample amends. The delight expressed by Agamemnon on his return to his family is hap-

(e) Metastasio, in his valuable remarks on Aristotle's Art of Poetry, says, that the number of acts in every drama should more depend on the business to be transacted, than on rule and custom. Should this liberal notion be sanctioned by the critics, and become a precept, from how many scenes of insanity will it save us! Sig. Gioseffo de Gamerra of Milan, coinciding in opinion with Metastasio, published (MS. 1771) a tragedy in four acts, entitled, I Solitarj; of which the Italian critics speak in terms of praise.

nily

pily expressed: but knowing, as we do, the conjugal infidelity of Clytemnestra, it is with pain we hear him exclaim, SEC. III.

Oh quanto è dolce
Ripatriar dopo gli affanni tanti
Di sanguinosa guerra! oh vero porto
Di tutta pace, esser tra' suoi!

The enquiries of Agamemnon after Orestes, are natural; the unfeigned joy of Electra, affecting; and the confusion of Clytemnestra, on first meeting her injured husband, strongly expressive of guilt. But the bloody deed of this princess is not followed by remorse. She dreads the wrath of her son, but her conscience is quiet. The play thus ends without a moral either expressed or implied. Thomson's tragedy on this subject, is tame; but it inculcates an useful moral.

L' Oreste. The contending passions which tear the breast of Clytemnestra, are admirably described in this play. And the horrid joy of Orestes, on killing Egistus, rises finely and naturally to madness, on finding that he had inadvertently killed his mother at the same time. Had the play ended with the insanity of Orestes, a moral deduction would have naturally suggested itself to the reader. But in the exclamation of Pilades,

Oh dura
D'orrendo fato inevitabil legge!

the author seems to exculpate Orestes at the expence of heaven.

La

SECT. III.

La Rosmunda. The fable of this tragedy is not founded i history: it is entirely the invention of the author,(f) and perhaps, the least happy effusion of his genius. The persecution of the fair and tender Romilda, is unprovoked. And it is to be hoped, the ferocity of Rosmunda is unnatural. The culpability of Helmichild did not admit of a doubt: to attempt at making him appear innocent, was therefore rendering no service to the cause of morality. Ildovaldus is an amiable, but not a decided character. The most interesting situation in this tragedy is the last scene, and that, the author acknowledges, " è stato preso, in parte, da un romanzo francese, intitolato, L'homme de qualité."

In the " parere," or remarks on this drama, the author seems apprehensive that his heroine might be coldly received because she is not mentioned either by Homer, or by Sophocles. But surely his own observation might have taught him, that the " domestica facta" are more interesting, than Grecian and Roman stories. "We have been," as Dr. Johnson remarks, " too early acquainted with the poetical heroes to expect any pleasure from their revival; to shew them as they have already been shewn, is to disgust by repetition; to give them new qualities or new adventures, is to offend by violating received notions." The author's apprehensions were not, however, totally groundless. His Rosmunda bore no re-

(f) Though we are told, that " questo fatto tragico è interamente inventato dall' autore," Bandello seems to have supplied some of the materials. See *Novel.* 18, *part* iii.

semblance

semblance to the injured queen with whom his countrymen had been acquainted in the page of Machiavelli, and in the scenes of Rucellai. Her character and her adventures were new. It was then to be feared, that this violation of received notions might rather offend than please; and that it did not please may be inferred from the neglect into which the tragedy has fallen. L' Ottavia, though not the most successful of our author's tragedies, is infinitely superior to the drama of Seneca on the same subject. It exhibits, in strong colours " il contrasto fra l' eroismo della scelleraggine, e quella dell' innocenza."

Il Timoleone. To render a tyrant amiable, and fratricide admirable, requires no common powers. This our author attempted in the drama before us, and, in the opinion of a celebrated critic, he has succeeded. Though there is little incident in this tragedy, it is yet extremely interesting. This excites the surprize, and exacts the praise of the Abate Cesarotti."(g)

La Merope. We think with the author, that to speak of the subject of Merope, is " un portar nottole a Atene, o vasi a Samo." It is, however, but justice to observe, that his tragedy can be read with pleasure after the dramas of Maffei, and Voltaire. The Merope of Alfieri appears to us, as she does to him, " esser madre dal primo all' ultimo verso; e madre sempre; e nulla mai altro, che madre: ma, madre regina in tragedia.

(g) *Giorn. di Piz.* tom. LVIII. *art.* 9.

non

SECT. III. non mamma donnicciuola." Yet he modestly declares, that he does not think the soft maternal passion "è veramente il genere dell' autore." An affectionate and pathetic dedication to the mother of the author, is prefixed to this tragedy. "Una mia tragedia," says he, "che ha per base l'amor materno spetta a lei, amatissima madre mia. Ella può giudicar veramente, se io ho saputo dipingere quel sublime patetico affetto, ch' ella tante volte ha provato; e principalmente in quel fatal giorno, in cui le fu da morte crudelmente involato altro figlio, fratello mio maggiore. Ancora ho presente agli occhi l' atteggiamento del vero profondo dolore, che in ogni di lei moto traspariva con tanta immensità: e benchè io in tenerissima età fossi allora, sempre ho nel core quelle sue parole, che eran poche, e semplici, ma vere e terribili: "Chi mi ha tolto il mio figlio? Ah! io l' amava troppo: non lo vedrò mai più!" e tali altre, di cui, per quanto ho saputo, ho sparso la mia Merope. Felice me, se io in parte ho accennato ciò, ch' ella ha sì caldamente sentito, e che io, addolorato del suo dolore, sì vivamente conservato ho nell' anima!

Maria Stuarda. The author's reason for making choice of this subject, is singular: he chose it, because he did not like it; and he has succeeded accordingly. The subjects of all his other tragedies "scelti da lui, tutti più o meno gli andavano a genio, volea pure provarsi sopra uno, che niente stimava, e che poco piacevagli." His motive was,

"per

"per vedere se a forza d'arte gli verrebbe fatto di rendello SECT.
almen tollerabile." The experiment failed, and was not, we III.
believe, tried again. The principal characters in this piece are, however, well and faithfully drawn. Mary is unsuspicious, impatient of contradiction, and violent in conjugal and maternal attachments. Darnly, with jealousy rankling in his breast, is insensible to the blandishments of his lovely queen, while, from the imbecility of his mind, he falls an easy prey to the specious arts of Bothwell. For the names of Ormond and Lamorre, we vainly search the history of Mary's reign. Though the latter affects no particular character, he appears to be the confessor of the queen; and though he seems, from his name, to be a Frenchman, yet we find him endowed with the Scottish prerogative of second-sight. While Bothwell is carrying into execution his diabolical plan for the destruction of Darnly, Lamorre enters abruptly the queen's apartment, and describes, as if he beheld them, all the horrid scenes then passing at the castle; and immediately after, he is seized with a fit of prophesying. Want of action is the chief defect in this piece.

La Congiura de' Pazzi. Mr. Roscoe's observations on this tragedy are so ingenious, and so just, that I shall transcribe them without abbreviation. After having detailed with his usual elegance and perspicuity, all the particulars of the conspiracy of the Pazzi, he adds, (in a note): "As to the atrocity of the crime, and the turpitude of the authors of it, contempo-

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rary historians are agreed. It is only in our own days that an attempt has been made to transfer the guilt from the perpetrators of it, to those who suffered by it. The conspiracy of the Pazzi, has afforded a subject for a tragedy to a celebrated living author, who in his various dramatic works, has endeavoured to accustom his countrymen to bolder sentiment, and to remove the idea, that the genius of the Italian language is not adapted to the purposes of tragedy. It must however be confessed, that in attempting to render this transaction subservient to the interests of freedom, by his Congiura de' Pazzi, he has fallen greatly short of that effect which several of his other pieces produce. The causes of this failure are not difficult to discover. In selecting a subject for tragedy, the author may either derive his materials from his own fancy, or he may choose some known historical transaction. The first of these is the creature of the poet; the second he can only avail himself of so far as acknowledged historical credence allows. In the one the imagination is predominant; in the other, it is subservient to the illustration of truths previously understood, and generally admitted. What then shall we think of a dramatic performance in which the Pazzi are the champions of liberty? In which superstition is called in to the aid of truth, and Sixtus consecrates the holy weapons devoted to the slaughter of the two brothers? In which the relations of all the parties are confounded, and a tragic effect is attempted to be produced by a total

total derelirtion of historical veracity, an assumption falsehood for truth, of vice for virtue? In this tragedy lielmo de' Pazzi, (there called Raimondi) who marri anca the sister of Lorenzo, is the chief of the conspirator and failing in his attempt, executes vengeance on himsel but Machiavelli expressly informs us, that "Guglielmo Pazzi, di Lorenzo cognato, nelle case di quello, e per l' i nocenza sua, e per l' aiuta di Bianca sua moglie, si salvò."(Whereas Francesco the leader of the assassins, and who not related to the Medici, died by a halter. If we are s prised at so extraordinary a perversion of incident and cha racter, we are not less so in perusing the remarks with which the author has accompanied his tragedy, in which he avows an opinion, that Lorenzo would be too insignificant even to be the object of a conspiracy, if he had not lent him a fictitious importance! It is to be hoped that the better informa tion, or the riper judgment of this feeling author, will in duce him to form a more just estimation of the ch

a man, whose name is the chief honor of his count adopt the converse of the assertion with which h his remarks on this tragedy. "che per nessu mondo non vorrebbe l'aver fatta."(*i*) In sc. perverted characters of Lorenzo and Giuliano, a with great ability, while the cause of democracy is

(*h*) *Hist. Lib. viii.* (*i*) *Vol. i. p. 211.*

etted. Here let me ask, if that cause can be good which
es supports from the violation of truth? But this is not
ly occasion on which we find our author attempting to
nulate the character of Belial, who

could make the worse appear
The better reason.

Of this tragedy, which has attracted the notice of the pub-
from the strictures of Mr. Roscoe, some specimens will
urally be expected, and shall be given; but in selecting
em, I shall pass over such passages as the author would
now, I trust, wish "to blot"

In the following extracts a just and elegant tribute of
praise is offered to the memory of the founder of the Medi-
ean greatness.

Giul. Lorenzo, è ver, benigna stella splende
Fuor su noi. Fortuna al crescer nostro
Ebbe gran parte; ma più assai degli avi
Gli alti consigli. Cosmo ebbe lo stato,
Ma sotto aspetto di privato il tenne.

Lorenzo, true; on our ascending hour
The natal planet with imperial glance
Usher'd us on to glory; still it runs
Its fated round with lustre undecay'd,
But Cosmo's nobler, intellectual beam
Piercing the dark profound of human souls

With

Was better guidance. Thus he steer'd the state
With artful influence, like the hand of heaven
He sway'd it at his will.

Lorenz. Giunti all' apice stator, Giuliah, non siamo
Tempo à d' ardir, non di pesare. Acchiuse
Già Cosmo in se la patria tutta, e fesse
Gridato padre ad una. O nulla, o poco,
Pier nostro padre alla tessuta tela
Aggiunse: avverso fato i pochi ed egri
Suoi dì che al padre ei sopravvisse, tosto
Troncò: poco v' aggiunse, è ver; ma intanto
Ei succedendo a Cosmo, e a Piero noi.

Till we have soar'd
Even to the boldest pitch, we are not safe
Still we must rise, or be for ever fallen!
The season of debate is now no more
We must decide and dare! Old Cosmo's hand
Could turn the balance of the state at will;
For this they call'd him Father. Piero's days
Were few and evil. He surviv'd his sire,
But added little to the glorious woof
Begun by noble Cosmo: yet his hand,
Weak as it was, convey'd the splendid gift
To us entire, a lineal heritage.

As dissimulation was not an ingredient in the true character of Lorenzo, it is not probable that he could have been persuaded,

SECT. III. persuaded, by the most artful eloquence, to follow the advice which his mother is taught by our author to offer him.

Giul. in vista
Moderati ed armani. Quell' dolcezza
Basti al bisogno, lentamente dolci;
E all' uopo ancor, ma parcamente, crudi.
Let your steps
By the soft semblance of humanity
Be harmoniz'd to lull suspicious thought.
Pursue your measures calmly with the mild;
But, when the crisis calls, be adamant!
Reluctant, yet relentless.

Though we learn from history, that Guglielmo de' Pazzi (the Raimondi of our author) was saved by the interposition of Lorenzo, we find him, in the drama before us, plotting his death.

Lorenz. un sol si attenta
Di resistermi, un solo; e temer dessi?
Giul. Feroce figlio di mal fido padre;
Da temersi è Raimondo . . . . .
Lorenz. Ambo si denno
Schernire, e a ciò sull'istante: è dolce anch' ella
Cotal vendetta . . . . . .
Giul. E mal sicura.

Lorenz.

Lorenz. In mente
Tutt' e forme ho cosi. Quel giovin fero
Vo tor di s-

Lor. One alone
Plants his determin'd foot, and seems to stand
In single opposition to our schemes.
Is he a formidable foe?

Jul What Raymond!
The haughty son of a suspected sire!

Lorenz I scorn them both; but each will shortly feel,
And satiate my revenge.

Ju Were it secure.

Lore Secure!—I'll tell you Julian,—here it lies
Ripe for explosion. Soon I'll hurl him down,
This young declaimer.

This tragedy is dedicated to the shade of Francesco Gori Gandellini of Sienna, in conjunction with whom it would seem to have been written.

Don Garzia. This tragedy exceeds in accumulated horrors, the productions of Schiller. I have just laid it down after an eager perusal, and my hand still trembles. Cosmo, grand duke of Florence, jealous of the power of Salviati, anxiously desires his secret removal by any means, no matter how treacherous, or how base. Accidentally hearing that his son Garzia is enamoured of the daughter of the object of his jealousy, he has her seized, and threatens to assassinate her unless

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unless her lover consents to seduce her father, in the dead of night, to a grotto in a deep wood near the city; and, in the moment of confidence, bury the sword which he puts into his hand, in the breast of the deluded old man. Piero (*k*) urges his brother Garzia to the perpetration of the dreadful deed, under a promise of undertaking to be himself the betrayer of Salviati; and then employs an artful pretext to induce his brother Diego, (who stood between him and the dukedom) to conceal himself in the fatal grotto. Garzia goes out at the appointed hour,—mistakes Diego for Salviati,—kills him,—and returns to report to Cosmo what he had done, and to demand the reward of his treachery Cosmo doubts,—explores the grotto,—finds the bleeding body of his son; then rushing forth, infuriate, meets Garzia, and stabs him in the arms of his mother. It would seem from this, and the preceding, drama,

(*k*) Piero, who "è veramente l'eroe" does not exist in history: he is a character of the author's own creation. I shall borrow, for the satisfaction of the reader, M. De la Lande's brief relation of the fact upon which this drama was founded. "La grande duchesse Eleonore, femme de Côme I. se tenoit volontiers à Pise, sur-tout en hiver, pour éviter la vue de Florence, où la noblesse toujours conjurée contre la puissance de sa maison, lui faisoit mille desagrements. Elle vint à Pise au mois de Janvier 1562, avec ses deux fils Don Garzie, et le Cardinal Laurent de Medicis: ces deux princes prirent querelle à l'occasion d'un chevreuil, Don Garzie tua son frere. La duchesse qui aimoit Don Garzie beaucoup plus que le Cardinal, espera que le grand-duc lui pardonneroit; elle détermina son fils à aller se jetter aux pieds de son pere pour obtenir grace; mais le crime étoit trop récent: Côme I. fut transporté de colere en voyant le meurtrier, et il lui passa son épée au travers du corps, en disant qu'il ne vouloit point le Caïn dans la maison; la grande duchesse fut si frappée de cette mort, qu'elle en mourut de chagrin." *Voy. en ital. tom. iii. p. 409.* For further information on this subject, I shall beg leave to refer the reader to the curious and interesting *Memoirs of the House of Medici*, translated from the French of M. Tenhove, by Sir Richard Clayton. *vol. ii. p. 515. 520.*

that

hat our author had sworn perpetual enmity to the family of Medici; for he perverts historic truth, and invents facts for the mere purpose of blackening their memory. (*l*) SECT. III.

Saul This drama evinces an intimate acquaintance with holy-writ. In the odes which David is supposed to sing in the presence of Saul, the language of inspiration seems to vibrate on our ears: we not only hear the "cunning player on the harp," but the inspired bard. (*m*) Michal's fears on the departure

(*l*) The author, in his remarks on this tragedy, having observed, that the authenticity of the fact, related in the preceding note, has been questioned, by some writers, adds, "ma è certo ancor più, che se così non seguiva, vista i costumi della scelerata schiatta dei Medici, questo fatto potea benissimo in tutte le sue parti seguire così."

(*m*) It is the wish of the ingenious count, that if the performer who fills the character of David, should be a singer as well as an actor, that the Odes should be sung to suitable music. But if an actor so qualified, cannot be found, he recommends a short symphony, adapted to the subject, before each stanza; and then, says he, David may proceed to recite the stanza with "maestria e gravità." During the prevalence of the chorus in tragedy, Italy, it may be presumed, abounded in actors who united vocal powers with talents for recitation: yet performers, thus gifted, are seldom distinguished in the annals of the Italian stage. It is from the eloge of a contemporary poet we learn, that Alexandro Rossi, a tragic player of the last century, sung and recited with equal ability. I shall transcribe my authority. It is a sonnet by Girolamo Preti, addressed

Al Sig. Alessandro Rossi, che cantava,
e recitava in una tragedia.

O d' angelico spirto aspetto, e voce,
Innocente del ciel nuova sirena;
Che la funesta ancor tragica scena
Con l' armonia fai dolcemente atroce.
Questa hor tremula, hor tarda ed hor veloce
L' alme col moto suo muove, e raffrena
Infiamma, agghiaccia, e turba, e rasserena,
Lega, e punge, e saetta, e pur non noce

Sono

SECT. III. departure of David for the field of battle are natural and affecting." The insanity of Saul is skilfully managed. And David appears throughout the play worthy of being deemed a man after God's own heart.

Agide is stiled by the author his fourth tragedy of Liberty: in fact it is a tissue of declamations in praise of "the mountain-nymph," who seems to be the goddess of our author's idolatry. For her he abandoned his house-hold gods, and still continues to follow her from court to court, an infatuated votary. In the dedication of his Bruto primo to General Washington, he says, "Io. benchè nato non libero, avendo pure abbandonato in tempo i miei Lari; e non per altra cagione, che per potere altamente scrivere di liberta." This drama is dedicated to the shade of Charles I. whose death the author does not think a fit subject for tragedy "non essendone sublime la cagione" But surely what it wants in sublimity, is amply supplied in pathos.

La Sofonisba. Here we again find a slight violation of historic truth. (*n*) Sophonisba repents of her 'engagement with Masinissa, and opens her arms once more to her captive husband

Sono i tuoi movimenti, e i tuoi sembianti
Più, che mortali: e tua facondia invita
Con le lagrime finte à veri pianti.
Te contemplando ogn' alma al ciel rapita
Da noi s' invola; e dai, se parli, o canti,
Ancor nunzio di morte, altrui la vita.

(*n*) Caro, who makes so conspicuous a figure in the tragedy of Trissino, does not appear in the Sofonisba of Alfieri. Nor did Bandello, (who seems to have read Trissino's drama with

husband.—Syphax relinquishes her to his rival;—retires to his tent, and falls upon his sword. Sophonisba seeks Masinissa,—declares her determination to die, and desires him to call his "fedel Culudda," and demand the poison which he kept for his master's use against unforeseen adversities. Masinissa complies, and presents the fatal draught with his own hand. The queen drinks it, and dies.

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La Mirra.—Though the author may modestly say with Ovid, on the same occasion,

> Daughters and fathers from my song retire,
> I sing of horror;

yet he has conducted his plot with such extreme delicacy, that the chastest ear could not be wounded at the recital of this drama. Although influenced through the whole piece by her unhappy passion, Myrrha does not betray the secret of her heart till it is, we may say, wrung from her in the agonies of death. In Ovid she is constantly actuated by the ardour of her incestuous desires: in the tragedy under consideration she presses her hand on a man whom she does not love, in order to estrange herself from her family and country with the hope that change of objects may help to subdue the violence of her passion. There is, it is true, little action in this piece;

think it necessary to be guilty of an anachronism, in order to introduce that implacable enemy of Carthage into his interesting tale. *Nouv. rom.* III. *Lond.* 1791. The death of Sophonisba happened A. U. 550; Cato's embassy to Carthage, did not take place until the year 596.

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yet it enthralls the attention. The character of Cinyras is per-
fect both as a father and a king! Combining all the feelings
and all the virtues which properly belong to a mother, and
wife. And the generous, the enamoured Perdita, a characte
of the poet's own creation, gives a new interest to the fable
This drama seems to be a favourite with the author, and mus
ever be so with the public.

Bruto primo, and Bruto secondo, may be denominated tu
multuous tragedies. In both, the stage is almost constantly
crowded with Roman citizens, and a cry for liberty resound
from every side. In the latter, Cæsar is assassinated at the
base of Pompey's statue, and falls upbraiding Brutus with in
gratitude:

Figlio,—et tu pure?—io moro—

—The people who surround the senate-house, hearing a
noise, enter. Anthony is silent. But Brutus displays his
bloody dagger, and then makes an oration over the body
This is the last, in chronological order, of nineteen tragedies
and, perhaps, the least happy of our author's dramatic pro-
ductions. It is rather a dialogue on liberty, than a tragedy
It wants action and pathos; and, like the Bruto primo, i
suffers considerably, in point of interest, from the total ab-
sence of female characters; for I do not number the dead
body (il corpo) of Lucretia in the latter, (o) with the dra-

(o) Atto I. sc. ii.

mati

matis personæ. In roundness and integrity of character, neither piece can be justly said to be deficient: but even the author acknowledges, there are many defects in the conduct of both. Indeed we frequently lose the dramatic poet in the declamatory champion of liberty: when we expect to hear a dialogue animated by reciprocal contention, we are stunned with the noise of the forum. The Bruto secondo is, however, with all its faults, infinitely superior to the generality of modern Italian dramas. SECT. III.

But perhaps there is no modern tragedy so well calculated to stand the ordeal of Aristotle, as the Aristodemo of the Abate Vincenzo Monti (8) a powerful rival of the feeling and prolific Alfieri. This awful drama shakes the soul to its inmost recesses, and makes the coward conscience shrink back upon itself. This effect it has in the closet,—what then must be its powers on the stage where the delusion is heightened by the aid of action and scenery! (p) Tiraboschi, on reading this tragedy, exclaimed,—" qual forza, qual' energia di stile! Qual vivacità d' imagini! Qual varietà di affetti! Il terribile Crebillon non è mai giunto a inspirar quel terrore, che genera

(p) It is modestly observed by the Abate Monti, that his Aristodemo, " è più da tavolino che da teatro;" and he adds, with equal modesty, that it owes its success on the stage to the admirable performance of Zanarini in the principal character. This tragedy was, I believe, first represented on the royal theatre of Parma, where it was printed (1786, 4to. & 1787, 8vo.) with great elegance. In the year 1788, it was republished in Rome (*presso Gioacchino Puccinelli*), with the Galeotto Manfredi. To this edition are subjoined " pentimenti dell' Aristodemo," and a critical essay on that tragedy by Gioacchino Pesuti, addressed to lady Clive.

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nei lettori questa tragedia." And I was assured at Rome by a lady as remarkable for the elegance of her mind, as the magic powers of her pencil, that the Aristodemo had excited her feelings to such a painful degree, that she could never be prevailed on to assist at a second representation. In selecting beauties from this tragedy there would be no end; but before I dismiss it, I shall enrich my work with the description of the spectre in Atto III. sc. 7.

Aristod.

Ebben: sia questo adunque
L' ultimo orror, che dal mio labbro intendi
Come or vedi tu me, così vegg' io
L' ombra sovente della figlia uccisa.
Ed ahii quanto tremenda! Allor che tutte
Dormon le cose, ed io sol veglio, e siedo
Al chiaror fioco di notturno lume,
Ecco il lume repente impallidirsi,
E nell' alzar degli occhi ecco lo spettro
Starmi d' incontro, ed occupar la porta
Minaccioso, e gigante. Egli è ravvolto
In manto sepolcral, quel manto stesso,
Onde Dirce coperta era quel giorno,
Che passò nella tomba. I suoi capelli
Aggruppati nel sangue e nella polve
A rovescio gli cadono sul volto,
E più lo fanno, col celarlo, orrendo.
Spaventato io m' arretro, e con un grido

Volg

Volgo atterre la fronte; e mel riveggo
Seduto al fianco. Mi riguarda fiso,
Ed immobile stassi, e non fa motto.
Poi dal volto togliendosi le chiome,
E piovendone sangue, apre la veste
E squarciato m' addita utero e seno
Di nera tabe ancor stillante e brutto.
Io lo respingo, ed ei più fiero incalza,
E col petto mi preme e colle braccia.
Parmi allora sentir sotto la mano
Tepide e rotte palpitar le viscere,
E quel tocco d' orror mi drizza i crini.
Tento fuggir: ma pigliami lo spettro
Traverso i fianchi, e mi strascina a' piedi
Di quella tomba, e QUI T' ASPETTO, grida:
E ciò detto sparisce.

Alfred. Then hear me, and be this the last
Of thy kind sympathy. I have too oft
Profan'd your ear with tales that nature shrunks
To listen to. Too true, alas, were all!
And this is too authentic, as these eyes,
And throbbing heart, confess.
I saw the shade
Of my fall'n daughter in the dead of night
When all things slept around, but guilt and woe
That 'woke with me: I saw her as I sat
By the faint gleams of an expiring lamp

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It suddenly grew pale. I rais'd my eyes
And there it stood, a tow'ring, ghastly shape
In a sepulchral stole that wrapt around
Its limbs of giant mold. It was the dress
That Dirce wore when in the tomb they laid
Her mangled limbs. On me a lowering look
She threw, and in a posture that deny'd
Escape (if I had thought on that) she stood
Full in the passage. O'er her hideous front
Her matted ringlets hung with dust and blood
Defil'd, a horrid shade! and seem'd a mask,
Far, far more horrible than what they hid.
I started back, and with a frightful scream
Of terror, turn'd away my face,—but there,
There 'twas at my side, in hideous state
Enthron'd! On me it fixt its stern regard,
And sat awhile unmov'd and dumb as death.
Then on a sudden starting up, it drew
From its pale features the dishevell'd hair
That rain'd on me a bloody shower. But not
Content with this, it threw its funeral vest
Aside, in wide display, and shew'd the deed
Of this disastrous hand. I strove to close
The horrid scene, and drew the flowing vest
Together close. With frantic haste, she rent
Again the bloody veil away: then clasp'd
My bosom to her bosom with main force.

Methough

Methought I felt her agonizing heart,
And her torn bowels, underneath my hand,
Yet palpitating with remains of life.
My locks were bristled up with fear. I try'd
In vain to fly. With mighty hand she seiz'd
Her trembling victim, led me to her tomb,
And HERE I WAIT THY COMING! with a scream
Aloud she cry'd;—then vanish'd from my view.(q)

When it was observed by a profound and elegant critic, hat no dramatic writer, except Shakspeare, has set forth the angs of guilt separate from the fear of punishment,(r) the Aristodemo of our author had not yet appeared. For in this lay, the mental agonies of the hero do not arise from the ear of punishment, but from the stings of remorse. Like the Macbeth of our immortal bard, this tragedy is therefore admirably calculated to medicate the mind by the operation of ity and terror.

In his Galeotto Manfredi, our poet softens his brow. He s mild, but he is still majestic. He lays his thunder aside, nd seizes on the flaming brand of love. But even this piece s not without its horrors. We shudder at the black villany

(q) Clothed in the marble of a Michelagnolo, or embodied in the colours of a Fuseli, how uly terrific would the shade of Dirce appear!—Monti, however, has evinced much judgeent, and great knowledge of human nature, in exhibiting this phantom only in description. Ghosts intended to haunt and affright the guilty should not appear upon the stage. It certainly was not the intention of Shakspeare, that the "powder'd form" of Banquo's ghost hould sit in Macbeth's place.

(r) Mrs. Montagu, *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakspeare. Lond.* 1777. p. 180.

SECT. III. of Zambrino and the manner of Manfredi's death, while we commiserate the agonizing contrition of Matilda. And on reading the concluding scene we are tempted to exclaim with the author

Oh spettacolo pietoso
Che trar potrebbe dalle selci il pianto!

In the blunt integrity of Ubaldo we find much to admire. And our tears mingle involuntarily with those of the lovely, the grateful, and the unfortunate Elisa. In the following scene (Atto i.) between Manfredi and his minister, we are presented with an useful lesson for those who are subject to the tyranny of the passions.

Ubald. Signor, tuo stato è fiero assai. La piaga
Sanar si può d' una beltà malvagia;
Chè in cor bennato amor malnato è breve:
Ma beltade è fatal quando è pudica.
Che pretendi però? Questo delirio,
Questa follia ti disonora.

Manf. Il veggo.

Ubald. Il tuo rimorso la condanna.

Manf. Il sento.

Ubald. E che ne speri?

Manf. Non lo sò.

Ubald. Nol sai?
Ascolta dunque; io tel dirò, la bendа

Io

Io squarcerò, che ei t' offusca i lumi.
Amar non è che desiar. Ma guarda.
Fra il tuo desire, e il desiato oggetto
Un' intervallo orrendo si frappone;
E per varcarlo calpestar t' è d' uopo
Fama ed onor: degli uomini e del cielo
Le leggi violar: spegner per via
Cento rimorsi per crearne mille,
Che poi faranti detestar la luce,
Tremar nell' ombra, e trabalzar nel sonno.
Allor ti grideranno, e fia quel grido
Un muggito di tomba! un' innocente
Tu seducesti, e abbandonasti ingrato
Una tenera moglie, che di pianto
Bagna il letto deserto. E in che ti spiacque
La sventurata? In che t' offese? I vezzi
Gli avea celesti, ne il suo cor conobbe
Un sospiro, un desio, che tuo non fosse.
Inconstante t' amò: che non avría
Fatto, fedele? Ed ella ancor t' adora,
E ti perdona. Oh! mio signor, deh torna.
Tornale in braccio; palpitar la senti
Contro il tuo seno, e cangerai consiglio.
Sì, gli amplessi di moglie, o prence mio,
Son possenti e divini: una dolcezza
Spandon su l' alma, che rapisce; e sola
Tutti assorbe gli affetti. Andiam, vien meco;

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Già sei cotanto: e cosa farà andando
Via, t'accendi signor.

Ubald. Your state, my lord, is dangerous. Flying wounds
Given by loose glances will admit a cure,
A vicious passion in a noble mind
Gains no sure footing; but where virtue's charms
Point the soft light'ning of a modest eye,
No buckler of the mind can ward the blow.
Yet think, my lord, 'tis but a raving fit,
A fond delirium. It becomes not well
The father of his people.

Manf. Too, too well
I feel it.

Ubald. Bring the lawless longing home
Before the bosom tribunal, and tell
What says the unbrib'd judge.

Manf Too well I know.

Ubald. What do you know?

Manf. I know not.

Ubald. Do'st not know?
Then mark me: I will tell thee. Stand thy ground
And show thy fortitude, while thus I tear
The bandage from thine eyes that blinds thy sense.
What is thy love so noble, so refin'd?
What but an ardent wish unsanctify'd
By reason's voice? The object of thy longing,
What is it but a meteor borne away
Beyond a horrid interval, a gulph

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By fame, by honor guarded, by the powers
Of heaven and earth combin'd! On these thy foot
Must trample, ere thou gain'st the fatal point.
You quench the noblest feelings, madly charge
Thro' the deep legions of remorse that guard
The pass—tho' millions in their room will rise.
What has thy fatal conquest gain'd at last?
Hell-haunted dreams and midnight-wakings dread,
While conscience ever pealing in thine ear,
Or, like a hollow murmur from the tomb,
Shall tell a damning tale of maids betray'd,
And then abandon'd, while thy faithful spouse
Bathes her deserted couch with widow'd tears.
And canst thou thus desert a faithful spouse?
What is her fault? Say is her form decay'd?
What various charms does your Eliza boast
Which she possesses not? Does not her heart
In all its wishes harmonize with thine?
She loves thee still, inconstant as thou art.
Heaven! what an ardent flame had warm'd her breast,
Glow'd in her cheek, and sparkled in her eye
If thou her tender passion hadst return'd!
Even yet she loves!—O what a proof of love
She gives thee still!—she will not see thy faults.
Turn, turn, my lord, and to thy yielding breast
Press that dear bosom where a heart resides
To thee devoted. Soon thou wilt perceive
In the soft raptures of connubial love,

A trans-

ACT. III.

A transport far superior to the glow
That 'tends the fever of a guilty flame.
Come, come, I see thee somewhat moor'd already;
It is a blessed moment. Come and try
How sweet it is to sooth a sinking heart,
To see the beam of love relume the eye
And banish pale despair.

In Sc. 2. Atto V. night as it appears to "a mind diseased," i
well described. And in the following passage we discove
Addison's fine description of the interval between the birth
and consummation of plots, almost literally translated.

Tra il concepire, e l' eseguir qualcuna
Feroce impresa, l' intervallo è sempre
Tutto di larve pieno e di terrore.

Att. V. Sc. 5.

Oh, think what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots, and their last fatal periods!
Oh, 'tis a dreadful interval of time,
Fill'd up with horror all, and big with death!

Cato Act 2. Sc. 3.

"L' argomento di questa tragedia," says the author, "
tratto dal Tonducci nelle sua storia di Faenza. L' essere i
stato educato in quella culta, e brillante Città, ove contrass
tante buone amicizie; l' aver veduto ocularmente la stanz
medesima, in cui narrasi esser seguito questo tragico avveni
mento; gli amici, che per amor di patria mi stimolarono

trattarlo

trattarlo; il mio desiderio di dar loro un solenne attestato della mia gratitudine; furono questi i motivi, che mi mossero a scrivere il Galeotto Manfredi." In this passage, the source from which Monti drew his story, is only pointed out; but in Mr. Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici,(s) all the particulars of Manfredi's tragical death are minutely and perspicuously narrated.

It now remains to speak of the author. In what part of Italy the Abate Monti was born, I am not prepared to tell. But we learn from the argument to his Manfredi, that he was educated in the "culta, e brillante" city of Faenza. At present he is an inhabitant of Rome, where he lately filled, with ability and integrity, the office of secretary to the duke di Nemi, nephew to the unfortunate Pius VI. But though he had

to business shap'd the poet's quill,

he did not totally abandon the muses. In the year 1793 he published a poem, in terza rima, on the death of Hugo de Basseville, the French envoy at Rome, who, having rendered himself disagreeable to the papal court by protecting an officious spirit of proselytism to the opinions then professed at Paris, was murdered in a riot on the 23d of January in the same year. This poem, which is entitled, In Morte di Ugo Basseville, is made the subject of an interesting article in the

(s) *Vol.* ii. *p.* 168—172. Mr. Roscoe observes a striking coincidence between this event, and the narrative of Paulus Diaconus, upon which Giovanni Rucellai has founded his tragedy of Rosmunda. *p.* 169, *note.*—According to Muratori, the death of Manfredi happened on the 31st of May, 1488. *Ann. d' Ital. tom.* ix. *p.* 289.

Monthly

SECT. III.

Monthly Review for 1794. "It is," says the ingenious critic, "a serious epic poem, resembling in manner that of Dante, and certainly not inferior in fanciful sublimity. The author takes the ground of a high religious zealot, to whom the insulted rights of his sacred country are most dear. He qualifies the fury of the rabble as "dispetto magnanimo e giusto sdegno," and seems ambitious of canonizing the holy army which tore in pieces the supposed enemy of the church. He first presents us with the slaughtered body of Basseville, and exhibits the soul as slowly liberating itself from the clay. Satan lays claim to it: but an angel of light obtains charge of it for the period destined to its purgation, and transports it through the air to France:

E supplicio ti sia la vista orrenda
Dell' empia patria tua!
Be it thy destin'd penance to survey
Thy country's doom in horrible display.

The aerial journey is highly poetical. On the Sardinian shore they behold the fragments of shattered ships, and carcases of the repulsed invaders. They visit Marseilles only to shudder at the licentiousness of the populace, and at the profanation of a crucifix. Next they hover over the apostate town of Avignon. At length, sights of increasing horror announce the vicinity of Paris.

The second canto allegorically describes the abomination of this second Babylon: then the execution of Louis XVI

Th

The ghosts of Damiens, Ravaillac, Ankarstroem, and of a fourth, who conceals with his hand his name written in blood on his forehead, bring fogs from the abyss to quench all emotion of pity in the spectators. The spirits of the French martyrs who fell for their king, receive his soul, and accompany it to Empyreum. SECT. III.

The third canto introduces Basseville moved by this scene to penitence, and asking forgiveness of Louis; to whom he narrates his adventure, and who bestows his pardon in these sublime words:

> Amai, potendo odiarlo, anco il nemico;
> Or m' è tolto il poterlo.

> While yet on earth, with reason's strong controul,
> I check'd the swelling tempest of the soul,
> And oft, with royal transmutation, strove
> To turn the rising tide of gall to love,
> Oft I delay'd the meditated blow,
> And smil'd forgiveness on the prostrate foe;
> But in these regions of eternal rest,
> Each rude malignant motion leaves the breast.

Now follows the triumph of the Parisians for the death of Louis. The ghosts of the philosophers are represented as thronging greedily about the scaffold, to drink the blood of the king. A cherub with a flaming sword restrains them. Two (Voltaire and Rousseau) are thus characterized:

Capitano di mille, alto si vede
Uno spettro passar lungo ed arcigno
Superbamente coturnato il piede;
E costui di Ferney l' empio e maligno
Filosofante, ch' or trai morti è corbo,
E fu trai vivi poetando un cigno.

And now the foremost of a numerous train,
All gaunt and grim, a spectre cross'd the plain,
With conscious pride the buskin'd limb he show'd,
As o'er the shadowy plain sublime he trode;—
Ferney's reproach! a God-defying name,
A sophist damn'd to everlasting fame,
And tho' on earth his swan-like numbers flow,
He shrieks a raven in the shades below.

Again:

Vassene solo l' eloquente ed irto
Orator del Contratto, ed al par del manto
Di Sofo, ha caro l' Afrodisio mirto.

Of aspect rude, but with enchanting tongue,
Rousseau in lonely musing pac'd along;
To him the mantle of the sage was dear,
But more he lov'd the myrtle wreath to wear.

These spirits, like the fallen angels of Klopstock, contend
which has done most mischief; and the author of the System

de la Nature, obtains the prize." (t)—Besides this poem, and the tragedies already noticed, the Abate Monti has written Capitolo sulla visione d' Ezechielle, Versi alla Santità di N. S. Pio VI. and a collection of poems on various subjects, which were printed (1787) at Parma. In his Versi, the little poem entitled Entusiasmo Malinconico, is worthy the vigorous pencil, and glooiny genius of his favourite Dante: even the "black melancholy" of Pope, breathing her horrors o'er the deep woods, and falling waters of the Paraclete, must yield, in sublimity, to the Entusiasmo Malinconico of our author. Though it would seem from this poem, that melancholy had marked the Abate Monti "for her own," yet we sometimes find his muse tripping lightly in the measure of Anacreon, and sometimes, with a gay air, offering incense to the fair. "I remember the Abate Monti extremely well," says one of my obliging correspondents. "I heard him recite passages from his Aristodemo, before it was published, in the Arcadian Academy of Rome. It was he who composed the elegant Anacreontic that hangs in the museum Clementinum." In the Antologia for July 1786, a beautiful canzonetta addressed, by our author, to the duchess of Nemi on her arrival at the baths of Pisa, is preserved. And in the

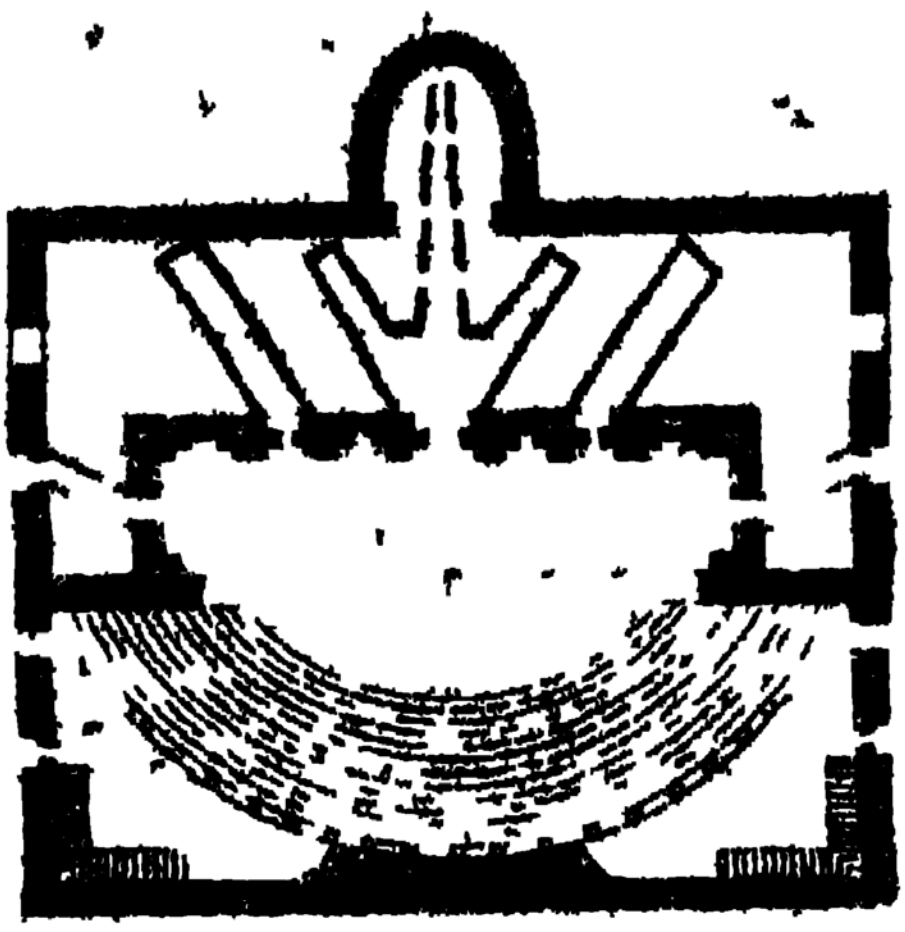
SECT. III.

(t) Vol. xvi. p. 514, 515. This critical analysis is concluded with a wish that the excellent translator of Dante's Inferno (the Rev. Mr. Boyd) would undertake a translation of the poem. How highly qualified he is for such an undertaking, will appear from the version, given in the text, of the passages selected by the reviewer for the illustration of his analysis. Except in the translation of the lines beginning "Anzi, pavendo, &c." my friend has adhered closely to his original.

SAUL III same work for January, 1787, honorable mention is made of the Aristodemo, and an account given of the flattering manner in which the Infanta evinced her gratitude to the author for the pleasure which she had derived from the perusal of his play. This mark of royal favor was a gold medal, with the Infanta's portrait on one side, and, on the reverse, the genius of the drama presenting a laurel crown to each of the dramatic muses. The following motto encircles the device:

NOVUM UTRIQUE COLLATUM DECUS.

With the Abate Monti I shall close my series of the tragic writers of Italy: thus borrowing the lustre of his name to crown my humble labours.



OLYMPIC THEATRE

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

(1) THE fraternità del Gonfalone was, we know, instituted in the year 1264, for the express purpose of representing The Passion of our Saviour, in the coliseum of Rome. But as the actors were inanimate, and the fable, of course, conducted without dialogue, the claim of that fraternity to the revival of the drama in Italy, may be disputed. The late Mr. Warton dates its revival from the miracle-play of Christ, represented in the year 1298, in Civita Vecchia. *Hist. of Eng. Poet. vol. i. sect.* 6. Had this ingenious writer pursued the enquiry a little farther, he might have discovered miracle-plays originating amongst the fabliers Français, whose rude effusions, (which are said to have given birth to the French stage) were not only known, but relished,—and perhaps imitated,—in Italy, in the age of Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio. See *Fabliaux ou contes du* xii^e *et du* xiii^e *siecle. Par.* 1781. *tom.* ii. *p.* 119—123. Mr. Pinkerton (*Hist. of Scot. vol.* ii. *p.* 431) has introduced to our notice a dramatic writer of so early a period as the tenth century,—I mean the fair Hroswitha, a German nun who flourished about the year 980. This lady wrote six comedies, "ad æmulationem Terentii," of which an edition was printed at *Nurenberg*, 1501.

(2) The passage in Rucellai's Rosmunda which I promised in the text, is as follows:

di questo venire
In brevissimo tempo nascer ponno
Molti vendicator del sangue nostro. *Atto* ii.

(3) As my copy of La Giulietta of Luigi da Porto is in manuscript, I do not refer to the pages from which I make my extracts. For this literary rarity, I am indebted to my friend Robert W. Wade Esq. of Knightsbridge, a gentleman whose zeal in the service of his friends can only be equalled by the elegance of his taste, and the universality of his genius.—I had finished my comparative view of the Adriana and La Giulietta before I consulted the *Eloquenza Italiana*, in which

I find

I find it observed that the action of the Adriana "è tratta dalla prima novella del secondo volume del Bandello." Da Porto and Bandello, it is true, relate the same story; but I am still, however, of opinion, that Da Porto was Groto's guide: and I am also inclined to think, that either the annals or the legendary tales of his own country, furnished Groto with a fact similar to that on which his tragedy is founded.

(4) As the Theseida of Boccaccio, is become a remarkable rarity of Italian literature, it may gratify the curiosity of the reader to be told, that a perfect copy of the edition of this work, printed at *Ferrara*, 1475. *fol.* is in the collection of Henry George Quin, Esq. of Dublin Castle.

(5) Amongst the various conjectures on the origin of the Paradise Lost, and on Milton's obligations to other writers, I do not recollect to have seen it observed, that the dialogue which takes place between Satan and Michael, during a short suspension of the war in heaven, (*Book* vi. *l.* 262—295) was probably suggested by the following passage in Jean Petit's justification of the conduct of the duke of Burgundy, in regard to the death of the Duke of Orleans. "Lucifer soy regardant, et considerant sa noble creature tant belle et tant parfaicte, dit en sa pensée luy mesmes: Je feray tant que je mettray ma chaire et mon throsne au dessus de tous les autres anges, et seray semblable à Dieu. C'est à sçavoir qu'on luy feroit obeïssance comme à Dieu, et pour ce faire il deçeut une grand partie des anges et les attrahit à son opiniõ, c'est à sçavoir qu'ils luy feroient obeïssance, honneur et reverence par maniere d'hommage, comme à leur souverain seigneur, et ne seroient de riens subiects à Dieu mais à iceluy Lucifer, lequel tiendroit sa maieste pareillement comme Dieu la sienne, exempte de toute la seigneurie de Dieu et de toute sa subiection. Et ainsi vouloit tollir à Dieu son createur et souverain seigneur la grãd partie de sa seigneurie et les attribuer à soy, et ce luy faisoit faire convoitise, qui s'estoit boutée en sõ courage. Si tost que S. Michel apperceut cela, il s'en vint à luy et luy dit que c'estoit trop mal fait et que iamais ne voulsist faire telle chose, et que de tãt que Dieu l'avoit fait plus bel et plus parfait de tous les autres, de tant devoit il monstrer greigneur signe de reverence, subiection et obeïssance à celuy qui l'avoit fait plus bel, qui estoit son roy et souverain seigneur. Lucifer dit, qu'il n'e feroit riens. Sainct Michel dit que luy et les autres ne souffreroient point telle iniure faire à leur createur et souverain seigneur, briefuement la bataille se meut entre celuy S. Michel et Lucifer." The learned theologian then proceeds to relate the fall of the angels in the words of "Monseigneur Sainct Jean." *Chron. de Monstrelet, vol.* i. *p.* 39.

(6) As

(6) As I have ventured to conjecture that the Villa Estense at Tivoli is covertly described in the Arsinda of Tasso, I shall here transcribe the passage upon which I found this surmise.

Abbiam reggie; abbiam moli
Magnifiche, e superbe anco trà noi,
L' oro, le gemme, ogn' altro
Più pregiato ornamento
Voi gl' avete di là, noi ve li diamo;
E con vostri tesori i nostri avanzi.
Di quell' opre io stupisco, in cui risplende
L' alterezza del pensiero, in cui risulge
D' un' ingegno inventor la pellegrina
Novità curiosa. Alzar da terra
E sospese sù gl' archi
Quasi in braccio del cielo
Selve piantar, che facciano ombra al sole;
Sovra immense colonne,
In vastissima conca
Di ben commesse pietre
Racorre intiero un lago, e come augelli,
Nudrir ne l' aria i pesci; in campo aprico
Tirar d' erbe gentili
Con studiosa man linee fiorite,
Che misurin del biondo auriga eterno
I lucidi viaggi
Sì, ch' un' ombra ingegnosa
Del dì volante additi
A numeri di fiori l' ore odorate;
Trar da romita balza
Vago ruscel, mandar gl' argenti amori
Per sotterranee vie di cavo piombo
A dar musica voce
A sonoro strumento
D' argentee canne, ed insegnar à l' acque
D' alternar dolcemente à l' altrui canto
Aggiustata armonia d' umido spirto
In questo, Ateste, in questo
Stan le mie meraviglie, e tali non hanno
Ch' io sappia, i nostri lidi.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

The [illegible] water works, to which the poet so prettily alludes, [illegible]—but they are now silent and neglected! Indeed the whole villa, [illegible] the family to which it once belonged, is falling fast to decay.—but it is magnificent even in ruins! Perhaps some future historian of the art of gardening may one day visit the spot, in order to seek out, amidst its mouldering remains, the true origin of what the French term "l'architecture du jardinage," in modern Italy; for it was, I believe, in the fantastic garden of this villa, it began. Nor is it unlikely that the idea was inspired by the villa Adriana which stands in the neighbourhood. It was certainly in the villa Estense, if we may credit Tasso, that the ancient art of making water produce musical sounds was revived. "Il primo, che facesse fare fontane con organi di canne di stagno, che giorno, e notte musicalmente sonassero, alternando diversi suoni, fu il Cardinale Hippolito di Ferrara, nel suo mirabil giardino di Tivoli" *Pens. diversi. p.* 400. *Ven.* 1646. Perhaps these gardens may be sometimes traced in Milton's description of the garden of Eden. Being genuine, they, of course, contain

Shade above shade, a woody theatre.

And as they are surrounded with a wall which seems to have been kept down for the purpose of letting in the circumjacent country, it may be fairly conjectured, that our divine bard had them in his mind when he describes Eden as giving, to our general sire,

Prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.

In these gardens too are

Umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess.

These it may be said, are

Fancies built on nothing firm.

I do not insist on the stability of these foundations. But surely it will not be denied, that much of the mental wealth which Milton obtained from observation on the continent, enriches the pages of his immortal poem.

(7) While these sheets were passing through the press, the letter of an Italian friend acquainted me with the death of Count Pepoli; an event which every lover of elegant literature must deplore.

(8) My notice was first directed to the dramatic writings of the Abate Monti by my lovely and accomplished friend the late Marchioness Cornelian. Her refined

taste

mate appreciated their merits, and her feeling breast paid due homage to their predominant horrors. During the progress of this work, I was often animated by the hope of gratifying her with this feeble attempt at tracing out the history of an art she loved, and in which she was highly qualified to excel. But when my labours were drawing to a conclusion, heaven, in pity, snatched her from the agonizing sight of her beloved Italy humbled before the fell spirit of democracy.

Heu! flore venustatis abrepta.

Page 11. Should any thing which has been said in regard to Galeotto del Carretto excite a desire to enquire into the history of his family, I shall beg leave to direct the reader's notice to the second part of Bandello's *Novelle*, where he may find, *Istoria de l' origine de i sigg. marchesi del Carretto, et altri marchesati in Monferrato e ne le Langhe*, Nov. 27. Bandello shared with Galeotto, the protection of Isabella d' Este Gonzaga: several of his novels are addressed to this lady.

Page 84. Having omitted to notice, in the proper place, the first edition of the Orazia of Aretino, I shall transcribe its full title here:

Tragedia intitolata l' Orazia di M. Pietro Aretino. In Venezia, Giolito de Ferrari, 1546, in 8vo.

Page 47. De Bure refers the first edition of the tragedy entitled *Il libero Arbitrio*, to the year 1546, but says that the second edition (*Stamp. l' anno* 1550. *in 8vo.* "est la plus recherchée des curieux, parcequ'elle renferme des augmentations qui ne sont pas dans la premiere." *Bibliog. instruct. tom.* i. *p.* 719. We learn from the same industrious compiler, that this tragedy has been translated into Latin and French. The Latin translation I have not seen; but I shall give the title of the last French version:

La Tragédie du Roi Franc-Arbitre, en laquelle les abus, pratiques et ruses cauteleuses de l' Ante-Christ, sont au vif déclarées, d'un style fort plaisant et recréatif, et nouv. trad. de l' Italien en François. Impr. à Ville-Franche, 1559. in 8vo.

It is to be lamented that the most defective part of the *Bibliographie Instructive* is the catalogue of the "Poëtes Dramatiques Italiens."

Page 238. It seems to have escaped the notice of all Pope's biographers, that when the Marquis Maffei visited Twickenham, in company with Lord Burlington and Dr. Mead, he found the English bard employed on a translation of his Merope.

yet the public have been in possession of this anecdote above fifty years. The Marquis in his answer to the celebrated letter addressed to him by Voltaire, says, " Avendomi Mylord Conte di Burlington, e il Sig. Dottore Mead, l' uno e l' altro talenti rari, ed à quali quant' io debbo non posso dire, condotto alla villa del Sig. Pope, ch' è il Voltaire dell' Inghilterra, come voi dite il Pope della Francia, quel bravo Poeta mi fece vedere, che traduceva la versione della sua Tragedia in versi Inglesi. se la terminasse, e che ne era disperato, per es." *La Merope. Ver.* 1745. *p.* 180. With the fate of this version we are, and probably shall ever remain, unacquainted: it may, however, be safely presumed, that it was never finished to the satisfaction of the translator, and therefore committed to the flames.

Page 264, Note (*u*). I have said that the French opera of Jephthe might have suggested to Graneili the idea of making the affecting story of the sacred Iphigenia the subject of a tragedy. It has since occurred to me, that if the idea was not original with Graneili, it is more probable that it was suggested by the Jephthes, sive votum, of George Buchanan; a drama on the severe plan of Seneca. The action of this tragedy is occasionally suspended by odes sung by a chorus of the daughters of Israel: and the mother of the heroine is introduced to heighten the pathos:—an angel delivers the prologue.

Page 208. In my account of the institution of the Arcadian Academy, I have related, that it was resolved, " that each member should assume a pastoral name." In illustration of this fact, I might have mentioned the pastoral name decreed by the academy to the author of this work,—

EURANTE TIRINZIO.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

CONJECTURAL AND CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS

ON

1. *The* SOPHONISBA *of* THOMSON;
2. *The* CATO *of* ADDISON;
3. *The* CATONE *of* METASTASIO.

—— Which is borrowed of me to be employed by our critics, and to the business of the present day? take away every bird of the forest his proper feathers.

JOHNSON.

The SOPHONISBA *of Thomson.*

THOUGH Thomson, in the elegant little preface to his Sophonisba, does not acknowledge any obligations to the Sofonisba of Trissino, yet I am inclined to think he has many. The plots of both plays are conducted in the same manner, with this difference only, that, in the Italian tragedy, Cato once appears, and a chorus remains constantly upon the stage. But as the appearance of that stern republican was not ne-

a cessary

cessary to promote, or hasten the catastrophe, it might be dispensed with; and the laws of the English stage proscribed the chorus. However, though Thomson, in obedience to the dramatic laws to which he was subject, omitted the chorus, yet he seems to have done so with some reluctance; as he subjoins to his drama "A nuptial song, intended to have been inserted in the fourth act;" which, had it been introduced, was to have been sung, chorally, by the female attendants of Sophonisba. Into this song our poet has transfused several beauties from an Ode to Love, in Trissino's tragedy, beginning

Amor, che ne i leggiadri, &c.

But this is not the only occasion on which the English poet seems indebted to the Italian bard. In the following passages the marks of imitation are strong.

The manner in which Syphax was made prisoner, is thus related by both poets.

Mor. - - - - - - I'll tell you what.
By Mauritan, the marvelous account,
Fierc'd, threw him headlong on his chariot-wheels.
And now he comes in chains.

E mentre, ch'ella sfrenata e quasi vola
Trovossi in mezzo de' nimici a caso,
Che gli uccisero sotto il suo cavallo

Fu

Epi can taste [illegible]
Che'n vira [illegible]

When the captivity of Massinissa's Sophonisba appears inevitable, she exclaims,

And is it fit for me,
Who in my veins, from Asdrubal deriv'd,
Hold Carthaginian enmity to Rome.

- - - - - - - -

- - - - is it fit for me
To sit in feeble grief, and trembling wait
Th' approaching victor's rage, reserv'd in chains
To grace his triumph, and become the scorn
Of every Roman dame? Gods! how my soul
Disdains the thought! This, this shall set it free.—

(Offers to stab herself.)

Sarà, ch'io lasci la regale stanza,
E lo nativo mio dolce terreno;
E ch'io trappassi il mare,
E mi convenga stare
In servitù, sotto l'superbo freno
Di gente aspra, e proterva,
Nimica naturale del mio paese.
Non fien di mia; non fia tal' cosa intesa;
Più tosta vò morir, che viver serva.

In the English play, Phœnissa, the confident of Sophonisba, prevents the execution of this bloody purpose of the queen, observing, at the same time, that death

is our last [illegible]

addition, however, that she would herself rather

urge the faithful ghost to her heart,

than see her

drag a chain,
And walk the triumph of insulting Rome;

In the Italian tragedy, the chorus interferes on the same occasion, and in the same manner employs similar arguments to dissuade Sophonisba from having immediate recourse to suicide, to save herself from captivity:

Buon è, buon è fuggir le crude mani;
Ma non già con la morte, [illegible]
Ch'ella è l'estremo mal di tutti i mali.

While Massinissa is raising the kneeling Sophonisba, the English poet makes him thus call upon the gods to confirm his promise.

"Here I swear,"
By the tremendous powers that rule mankind,
By heaven, and earth, and hell! by love and glory!

The

No. 1.

[redacted]

We find the same form of invocation in the Italian drama.

E per mezzo i miei preghi la mia destra
Tentar vi voglio, ed ei per questa guida
E per quel Dio, che in lui ha dato favore
A racquistar il mio paterno regno,
Che servato vi fia quel, che promesso
E con [redacted] le fatiche
Mostro, che hà vita in questo seno,

The circumstance of offering the hand in pledge of surety, is an historic fact, for which both poets are indebted to the Roman historian. Massinissa's letter, or message, to Sophonisba, and her conduct on receiving it, are copied too, as well by the Italian as the English poet, from the relation of Livy. But the former has shown more regard to religious propriety in making his heroine, after she has drained the fatal bowl, prepare for death by offering a sacrifice to Proserpine

La regina era andata dopo cena,
Nel più secreto luogo de la casa
Per fare un sacrificio, che facean
Proserpina benigna a la sua morte.

That

That Thomson was determined (as he asserts) to make choice of this subject by the simplicity of the story, I am willing to believe; but to infer, from his silence, that he was unacquainted with the Italian tragedy, would be to do violence to probability. It is alluded to in the prologue by a friend." Besides, as the English tragedy appeared about the time that Thomson was preparing to travel with Mr. Charles Talbot, it may be presumed that Italian literature was not forgotten in his preparatory studies.

But whatever Thomson appropriated, he improved. His plot is better conducted than that of the Italian poet; and the few sentiments which he has borrowed, he has splendidly invested with his luxuriant diction; producing, by the force of his own genius, a tragedy which drives the passions to their "full tumult of emotion."

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2. *The* CATO *of Addison.*

WE are told by Tickell, that Addison wrote four acts of his Cato during his travels; but Dr. Johnson seems to think, that he then only collected his materials, and formed his plan. It is certain, however, that the last act was written after his return to England. If we admit that Milton, with the Book of Genesis lying open before him, condescended to borrow materials for his Paradise Lost, from two Italian dramas of inferior

merit; may we not suppose that Addison, though he found the subject of his tragedy in Roman history, would not disdain to borrow hints for the conduct of his fable, or incidents for its embellishment, from an obscure Italian writer? Perhaps we might go farther and say, that the Italian opera, of which he gives so ludicrous an account in his travels, first suggested to him the idea of making Cato the hero of a tragedy. It does not, I think, appear that Addison mentioned to any of his literary friends, before his departure for the continent, his intention of writing a tragedy upon that subject; but it is not, we find, denied that he either wrote part of his tragedy in Italy, or collected materials for it "while he was travelling at leisure." But this is a point upon which "shadows, clouds and darkness" must for ever rest: however, a ray of light seems to beam upon it, from a quarter, towards which none of his biographers have, I believe, ever turned their eyes.

"During my stay at Venice," says Addison, "the opera that was most in vogue, was built on the following subject: Cæsar and Scipio are rivals for Cato's daughter. Cæsar's first words bid his soldier's fly, for the enemies are upon them; 'fi leva Cesare, e dicea' soldati; á la fugga, a la scampo!' The daughter gives the preference to Cæsar, which is made the occasion of Cato's death. Before he kills himself, you see him withdrawn into his library, where, among his books, he observed the titles of Plutarch and Tasso. After a short soliloquy,

soliloquy, he strikes himself with [illegible] that he holds in his hand; but, being interrupted by one of his friends, he stabs him for his pains, and, by the violence of the blow, unluckily breaks the dagger on one of his ribs, so that he is forced to dispatch himself by tearing up his first wound.

That Addison raised his elegant structure upon the foundation laid by the Italian poet, I will not assert; but I think it may be presumed, that he learned from the opera, which he so happily ridicules, to disgrace his noble tragedy with a love intrigue. In the English, as well as in the Italian drama, soft vows and amorous sighs, mingle themselves with the shouts of hostile armies. In both, the daughter of Cato has her lovers; and even while the enemy is thundering at the gate, and Cato preparing himself for death, Marcia and her friend Lucia calmly converse upon the subject of their respective passions. I doubt, could we see the Italian drama, whether we should find any thing more censurable in it. The Italian poet produces his catastrophe by the mean of love; the English bard lumbers his scenes, and obstructs the progress of his fable with six whining lovers. Love is the youth which animates the Italian drama; but in the English tragedy, it is a subtle and corrosive poison which preys upon its vital parts.

But it is not in the love intrigue only, that Addison seems to have imitated the Italian poet. The hero of each drama prepares for death and perpetrates suicide in the same manner. When the hero of the Italian drama has resolved on death, he

retires to his library, repeats a soliloquy, and when he is in the act of raising his hand to terminate his existence, he is interrupted by the entrance of a friend, whom he strikes in the wrath of disappointment. The Cato of Addison retires to his study also, repeats a soliloquy; and when he is about to give himself the fatal wound, Portius enters, and narrowly escapes the same punishment of the intruder in the Italian drama; for though Cato does not stab, or strike him, he threatens to do so, and is only restrained by a sudden impulse of paternal affection.

> Retire, and learn obedience to a father,
> Or know, young man!

That Addison was acquainted with the incidents in the Italian drama, which we have detailed, is unquestionable, for it is from him we learn them: nor can it be denied, that there are parallel incidents in his tragedy. It is true that the manner of Cato's death, and the attending circumstances in both dramas, may be found in Plutarch. But we learn neither from history nor oral tradition, that Cato had a daughter shut up with him in Utica; nor do his biographers number with his children, one of the name of Marcia. May we not then presume, that the Marcia in question, owes her birth to the Italian poet, and that the love intrigue was drawn from the same source? What other obligations Addison had to the Italian drama, I shall not venture to determine. I have

opened a field for conjecture, which my readers may now explore.

Led by the foregoing enquiry into a careful examination of Dr. Johnson's Life of Addison, I was confirmed in an opinion which I have long entertained of the "sturdy moralist," that he was a careless narrator, and of a disposition too indolent for historic investigation. Addison, he says, returned from his travels in 1702; yet it appears, in the title-page of the account which he published of his tour, that he was abroad in 1703. The second edition, by Tonson (1718) of that amusing book, now lies before me, and is thus entitled, "Remarks on several Parts of Italy, &c. in the Years 1701, 1702, and 1703." Speaking of this work, Johnson says, that "his observations are such as might be supplied by an hasty view;" yet he tells us, in the same page, that he travelled "at leisure." "In about two years," continues our biographer, "he found it necessary to hasten home; being, as Swift informs us, distressed by indigence." I shall not positively deny the fact, but I shall beg leave to question the authority. It is in one of his bitterest satires that Swift says,

——Addison, by lords carest,
Was left in foreign lands distrest;

and we know that in satires truth is often either tortured, exaggerated, or totally suppressed. In 1699, a pension of three

three hundred pounds a year was settled on Addison, "that he might be enabled to travel," says Johnson. With such an income, at that time, no man of common prudence could be reduced to indigence. And in common prudence, Addison was not deficient.

Having gone a little out of my way, in order to correct a few misrepresentations in the life of a favourite writer, in a work which is universally read and admired, I shall return to observe, that the Cato of Utica, which was represented at Venice, in the theatre of St. John Chrysostom, during the carnival of 1701, and which is so particularly noticed by Riccoboni, in his Reflexions sur les differens Theatres de l'Europe, was probably the identical opera which Addison saw.

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3. *The* CATONE *of Metastasio.*

It has been asserted, that Metastasio has transfused into his Catone some of the most brilliant passages in the Cato of Addison. The charge is not without foundation. However, the Italian drama possesses so many original beauties, that the few instances of plagiarism, or rather imitation, which I am about to adduce, cannot blast the verdure of the author's laurels, or diminish, in the smallest degree, his well-earned fame.

When Arbaces solicits the hand of Marcia in the Italian opera, she reproves him, at least in the spirit, if not in the words of Addison's Cato.

Marz. Come! Allor che paventa
La nostra libertà l'ultimo fato,
Che à nostri danni armato
Arde il mondo di bellici furori,
Parla Arbace di nozze, e chiede amori!

Juba having hinted at his passion for Marcia, Cato thus dismisses him.

Cato. Adieu, young prince; I would not hear a word
Should lessen thee in my esteem: remember
The hand of fate is over us, and heav'n
Exacts severity from all our thoughts:
Is it now a time to talk of aught
But chains, or conquest; liberty, or death?

The conditions upon which Cato offers to accept the friendship of Cæsar, are the same in both dramas.

Lascia dell' armi
L'usurpato comando; il grado eccelso
Di dittator deponi; e, come reo,
Rendi, un carcere angusto,
Alla patria ragion de' tuoi misfatti.
Questi, se pace vuoi, saranno i patti.

Addison's Cato, addressing Cæsar's ambassadors, says,

Bid him disband his legions,
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,

Submi

Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate.
Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.

Here, perhaps, history will step in, and assert her claim to those conditions. But she can establish no title to Cato's last address to his daughter, when he tells her, that

A senator of Rome, while Rome survived,
Would not have match'd his daughter with a king.

Yet we find the Marcia of Metastasio borrowing the same idea, when her father is urging her to marry Arbaces.

E tu vorrai
Che la tua prole istessa, una che nacque
Cittadina di Roma, e fu nudrita
All' aura trionfal del campidoglio,
Scenda al nodo d' un re?

But the following lines are almost a literal translation of part of Cato's celebrated speech over the body of his son, in the English tragedy.

Ecco soggiace
Di Cesare all' arbitrio il mondo intero.
Dunque (chi' l'crederia?) per lui sudaro
I Metelli, i Scipioni? ogni Romano

Tanto

Tanto sangue versò sol per costui?
E' l' istesso Pompeo pugnò per lui?
Misera libertà! patria infelice!
Ingratissimo figlio! Altro il valore
Non ti lasciò degli avi,
Nella terra già doma,
Da soggiogar che il campidoglio, e Roma.

Whate'er the Roman virtue has subdu'd,
The sun's whole course, the day and year, are Cæsar's:
For him the self-devoted Decii dy'd,
The Fabii fell, and the great Scipios conquer'd:
Ev'n Pompey fought for Cæsar. Oh, my friends!
How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,
The Roman empire, fall'n! Oh, curst ambition!
Fall'n into Cæsar's hands! our great fore-fathers
Had left him nought to conquer, but his country.

As we trace with pleasure, a favourite work to its origin, I shall make no apology for observing, that the plot or fable of Metastasio's Catone, bears a strong affinity to that of the opera which Addison saw at Venice, and which both he and Riccoboni have described. Scipio, it is true, is not one of Marcia's lovers in Metastasio's opera; but we find Cæsar at her feet, as in the Venetian drama. In the Venetian drama, the preference which Cato's daughter shows for Cæsar, occasions the death of Cato: in Metastasio's opera, Marcia's preference of

of Cæsar to Arbaces, hastens the catastrophe. Nor should we omit to remark, that the chorus which our lyric bard has introduced, meeting the triumphal car of Cæsar, and singing

Già ti cede il mondo intero, &c.

was probably suggested by the piece of machinery in the Venetian opera, which Riccoboni thus minutely describes:

"As Cæsar with his army is supposed not to be far from the scene where the action is laid, and that the inhabitants of the province had prepared an entertainment for him upon the banks of the river; the ground of the stage represents a field, towards the middle of which, there was hung in the air a globe, resembling that of the world; this globe was observed to advance, by degrees, towards the front of the stage, to the sound of trumpets, and other instruments, and all this without the spectators being able to discern the pullies and machines that directed the whole. In the moment when it comes opposite to Cæsar, it opens into three parts, representing the then three known parts of the world. The inside of the globe shines all with gold, precious stones, metals of all colours, and contains a great number of musicians."

Though it may appear invidious to addduce a further charge of seeming plagiarism against Metastasio, I shall embrace this occasion to observe, that there is a striking resemblance between sc. 3, atto III, of the Demetrio, and several passages in Prior's Nut-brown Maid. In justice, however, to Metas-

tasio,

tasio. I must declare, that he was ignorant of English, and that Edward and Emma never, I believe, appeared in any other language. The similitude must therefore be accidental. And as coincidence of thought will happen to all who consider the same, or similar subjects, I should be sorry if it were inferred from any thing I may have advanced, that it is my wish to number Thomson, Addison, or Metastasio with those who

flourish by imputed wit.

No. II.

LA FURIE.

MEGERE.

ENTREMÊTS DE LA TRAGEDIE DE SOPHONISBE.

(*Œuvres en rime de Jean Antoine de Baif, Secretaire de la Chambre du Roy, a Paris, M.D.LXXIII.* 8vo. *p.* 120.)

Or ay-je bien raison d'avoir le cœur en joye
Moy qui ris des malheurs qu'aux hommes on envoye
De nos hideux manoirs. Sus serpens sur ce chef,
Sus sifflez sautelans joyeux de ce meschef:
Sus sus flambeaux fumeux en signe de liesse
Ta flamme noire espan pour la grande tristesse
Qui tient toute l'Afrique: et sur tout pour les rois
Ausquels j'oste l'empire, et leurs braves arrois.
Cecy me meine icy, moy hideuse Megere,
Qui suis des infernaux sergente et messagere.
Car aux tristes enfers le plus de leurs ebas
C'est quand quelque malheur je rapporte la bas.
Syphax qui penſoit bien d'un plaisant mariage
Recueiller le doux fruict, de roy mis en servage,

Esclave est enchaîné de pieds de bras et mains,
Pour mener en triomphe au plaisir des Romains.
Sophonisbe sa femme aujourdhuy s'est donnee
(Dessous condition de n'estre point menee
Captive dedans Rome) à son plus grand amy
Mais qui se doit monstrer son plus grand ennemy.
C'est Masinisse roy, qui luy a fait promesse,
Qu'il ne pourra tenir, car il faut qu'il la laisse
Emmener aux Romains, et de la secourir
Il n'a plus beau moyen qu'en la faisant mourir:
Masinisse aujourdhuy fait à sa mieux aimee
Present d'une poison: la poison est humee:
Sophonisbe aime moins la vie que l'honneur:
L'amy de son amie est fait l'empoisonneur:
Le mary de sa femme. A moy toute la gloire,
A moy seule appartient de tant belle victoire:
L'honneur en soit à moy, puis que seule j'ay mis
Les amis en rancueur au gré des ennemis.
Puis que j'ay rebrouillé tout le bon-heur et l'aise
De ces rois, les tournant en malheur et malaise:
Puis qu'en si piteux point seule je les ay mis,
Que leur pitié fera pleurer leurs ennemis.
Seule de Cupidon seule j'ay fait l'office;
De ma rage emplissant Syphax et Masinisse
Avec ce flambeau mesme: et seule on m'a peu voir
De ce mesme flambeau faire tout le devoir,
Ensemble de Junon et du bel Hymenee
Le jour que Sophonisbe a Syphax fut menee:

Car

Car l'un et l'autre dieu sur moy se reposa
A l'heure que Syphax Sophonisbe espousa.
Telle est tousjours la fin de ceux que la furie
D'un nœu malencontreux hayneusement marie:
Or puis qu'en cet endroit je voy fait mon vouloir,
Il faut qu'en autre lieu je me face valloir:
J'irois a nos enfers en porter la nouvelle
Mais tout ce qui en est il ẽcauront bien tost d'elle:
Parquoy plus d'une part adresser je ne veux,
Tousjours en plus d'un lieu Megere fait ses jeux.

As Baïf usually set his own verses to music, (*Burney's Hist. of Music, vol. iii. p. 269*) the foregoing entremêt was, we may presume, sung to music of his own composition. The drama for which this entremêt was written, was a prose translation of the Sofonisba of Trissino, by Mellin de St. Gelai, which was represented before Henry II. at Blois, in 1559. The choruses in this translation, are in verse of various measures, and were sung, probably, to the music of Baïf.

No. III.

On the Origin of Versi sciolti.

THE invention of Italian blank verse has been attributed to Trissino, but, I think, without foundation. We find the productions of Boccaccio, and his contemporaries, sprinkled with verso sciolti. Even St. Francis, the founder of the order which bears his name, wrote in blank verse. His Cantico del Sole, which appeared in the beginning of the thirteenth century, is in that measure. The argument of the Comedia Amicitia of Jacopo Nardi, which was printed, without date, in Florence, and, which, from the doubtful evidence of the stanzas annexed to it, has been referred to the year 1494, are also in verso sciolto. Indeed it would seem from the following passage in the dedication to the Sofonisba, that blank verse had been known before the time of Trissino, and that he merely adopted that measure, because he deemed it best calculated for such productions as are intended to move, or express the workings of, the passions. "Quanto poi al non aver per tutto accordate le rime, non dirò altra ragione; perciò, ch'io mi persuado, che se a V. B. non spiacerà di voler alquanto le orecchie a tal numero accommodare, che la troverà, e mig-

e migliore, e più nobile, e fosse men facile ad asseguirs di quello, che per avventura è riputato. E lo vederà non solamente ne le narrazioni, ed orazioni utilissimo, ma nel muover compassione necessario; perciò che quel sermone, il quale suol muover questa, nasce dal dolore, ed il dolore manda fuori non pensate parole, onde la rima, che pensamento dimostra, è veramente a la compassione contraria." Yet Palla Rucellai, in the dedication to his brother's Api, publickly tells Trissino, "voi foste il primo che questo modo di scrivere in versi materni liberi dalle rime poneste in luce." But if Trissino did not invent this fabric of verse, he was unquestionably the first who employed it in "longer works." This is admitted by Maffei, and not denied by any other writer of eminence. Before the time of Trissino, "the jingling sound of like endings," was thought so essentially necessary in every poetical production, that few writers ventured to drop, even occasionally, these musical shackles. "Les premiers poëtes italiens, à l'exemple des provençaux," says the abbé de Sade, "s'assujettirent à cette contrainte, parce qu'elle étoit nécessaire dans leur langue, pour distinguer les vers de la prose. Dante sentit le joug, et n'osa pas le secouer; s'il n'avoit pas employé la rime, les esprits grossiers de son temps ne l'auroient pas regardé comme poëte." But Trissino, with the confidence of true genius, marched boldly on through two long poems, defying, like our Milton, "the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming." In the invocation to

to his Italia Liberata, he alludes to the new path he has taken :

> Ch'io mi son posto per novella strada,
> Non più calcata da terrene piante.

The example set by Trissino, was followed by several original dramatic and didactic writers, and by some translators of the Greek and Roman classics. But the Ottava Rima is so soothing to the Italian ear, that the epic muse of Italy, has not again ventured to clothe herself in the loose and flowing garb of verso sciolto.

I ought not to close this article without observing, that the biographers of Luigi Alamanni, assert his claim to the honor of inventing Italian blank verse. But when they make this assertion, they seem to forget, that the first production of Alamanni, in that measure, did not appear till 1532, and that Trissino's Sofonisba, was publickly represented in 1515, and printed in 1524.

On turning to that chapter in the Istoria della volgar poesia, which treats of versi sciolti, I find, that the fears of the early Italian poets, were not totally groundless. The Cantico del sole of S. Francis passed down to the time of Crescimbeni,

Crescimbeni, as a prose composition, and would probably be considered as such at the present day, if that learned writer had not discovered that, through the ignorance of transcribers, it was poetry in disguise. What happened to the verso sciolto of the holy bard, befel the blank verse of Shakspeare in the hands of his first editors. "Prose from verse they did not know," says Pope; "and they accordingly printed one for the other throughout the volume." Dr. Johnson praises a critic who observes, that "blank verse seems to be verse only to the eye." But we find, that without the aid of the ear, blank verse may deceive the eye.

No. IV.

Description of the House of Trissino near Vicenza.

THIS house stands in that part of the suburbs of Vicenza, called Cricoli, at the distance of half a mile from the gate of Saint Bartholomew. The flanking towers wear the appearance of an age more remote than that of Trissino. But the house is allowed to have been designed by the poet himself. It is supposed that the Sofonisba was finished, and part of the Italia Liberata, written in the tranquillity of this elegant retreat; and it may be conjectured, that it was here Trissino instructed Palladio in the rudiments of architecture. Having called in the aid of the pencil (see the frontispiece) to assist me in describing this house, so dear to the Muses, I shall only briefly observe, that it consists of two stories, the first of which retires a little, and leaves a space which is occupied by a collonade divided into three arches, and supported by Ionic pilasters, resting on pedestals. A suitable freeze fills up the interval between each story. And pilasters corresponding to those below, adorn the front of the second story, and support, with Corinthian capitals, the roof. Over the entrance is the following inscription, which probably alludes to the literary meetings held here during the occasional residence of Trissino.

ACCADEMICA TRISSINÆ. LUX ET RUS.

Charmed

Charmed with this rural retreat, Urban VII, before he was raised to the papal chair, used to pass much of his time here. The apartment which was allotted to him is distinguished by his bust, placed over the door, with the following inscription beneath it:

BEATISSIMI URBANI VII. HOSPITIUM.

I am sorry I am not prepared to describe the gardens belonging to this villa, or possessed of a copy of the Greek epigram by Trissino, in praise of the little fountain which adorns them. But I must not omit to observe, that Palladio, who afterwards enjoyed the friendship and instruction of Trissino, was almost a boy at the time of the erection of this house, and assisted, on that occasion, in the humble capacity of a scarpellino, or stone-cutter.

Two splendid palaces in the possession of the descendants of Trissino, still remain in Vicenza. One was designed by Vicenzo Scamozzi, and the other is attributed to Palladio.

No. V.

Fra cavalier magnanimi, e cortesi,
Risplende il Manso. GERUS. CONQUIST.

An Attempt to ascertain the Site of the Villa near Naples, in which the Marquis Manso received Tasso and Milton. With Notices of the Manso Family.

PRESUMING that nothing relating to the author of the Torrismondo, or his friend and biographer Manso, will be deemed impertinent in an history of Italian tragedy, I shall offer no apology for this article of my appendix.

As the biographers of Tasso afford no clue by which we may discover the situation of the villa near Naples, in which Manso received Tasso and Milton, and being desirous of ascertaining its exact site, I begged the assistance of Signor Signorelli in this enquiry. On this, as well as upon every other occasion on which I consulted him, this learned gentleman came cheerfully forward to meet my wishes. With his interesting communication on this subject, I shall indulge the lovers of literary history in his own words. "In qual luogo di Napoli però fu questo podere del Manso posto alla spiaggia del mare? In una lettera inscrita in un foglio periodico letterario di Napoli del cadente anno, si sostiene che fosse fuori la grotta

grotta che chiamasi di Puzzuoli. Di fatti in detta lettera citansi alcuni consigli legali di Francesco de Petris, contemporaneo del Manso fatti in favore del monte fondato da lui per l'educazione della nobiltà Napoletana, stampati nel 1637; dà quali si deduce che il marchese possedeva varj fondi in quella spiaggia. *Venerabilis mons* (dicesi nel consiglio 23) *creatus a Jo. Baptista Manso, marchione Villæ pro beneficio et emolumento Neapolitanæ nobilitatis, cui directus dominus quorumdam bonorum stabilium extra cryptam Puteolanam egit in 1° consilio contra rev. Dium Dominicum de magistro emphyteotam,*" &c. E nel cons. 31. del medesimo de Petris dicesi : "*Illustres Gubernatores montis de Manso directi domini quam plurimorum stabilium extra cryptam Puteolanam petierunt in 1° consilio licere sibi ratione directi dominii affigere arma, seu insignia venerabilis montis in domibus et territoriis*," &c. Questa spiaggia è stata deliziosa e fertile sino a pochi anni fa, e se ne alterò poscia la natura e l'aspetto per varie inondazioni." Of the many depredations committed by the sea, there are, perhaps, few more to be lamented than the destruction of a villa so richly gifted by nature, and so highly embellished by art, with the extrinsic endearment of having received, beneath its hospitable roof, two of the greatest epic poets of modern Europe. Tasso, in a letter to Manso, speaks thus of this sweet retreat : " Io ho grandissimo desiderio di godere il suo bellissimo luogo, che sulla piaggia del mare." But it is more particularly described by Manso himself, in his *Vita di Torq. Tasso. p.* 208. " Di-

morava all' hora il Manso nella dilettevolissima piaggia del mare, in un bel casamento alquanto sopra gli altri elevato, ed attorno attorno di bellissimi giardini circuito, i quali dalla vegnente primavera, di nuove frondi, e di variati fiori tutti rivestiti, con la verdura, e col soave odore di quelli, e molto più con la purità dell'aria per sì fatto modo Torquato dalla sua invecchiata malinconia ricrearono." Here Tasso completed his Gerusalemme Conquistata, and here he was inspired by the pious mother of Manso, with the idea of writing his divine poem of Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato; and it was in this delicious retirement, according to the ingenious conjecture of the late Mr. Warton, that the idea of writing an epic poem was first suggested to Milton by his noble host. Amongst the attractions of this villa, we may safely number the conversation of the polished proprietor. And when we reflect that the promontory of Misenum, the classical coast of Baiæ, and the romantic scenery of the piscatory eclogues of Sannazaro, were probably visible from its windows, we may easily conjecture upon what subjects the conversation of Manso occasionally turned in the society of such visitors as Marino, Tasso, and Milton.

But this was not the only villa in which Manso entertained his friend Tasso. He led him also to Bisaccio, of which he had once been the sovereign. Here Tasso endeavoured to dissipate the melancholy which preyed upon the noble structure of his mind, by partaking of the pleasures of the chace, enjoying

joying the charms of music, listening to improvvisatori, and even joining in the evening dance. Should some future votary of the Muses, after vainly searching for vestiges of Manso's villa near Pozzuoli, direct his steps to Bisaccio, he will find it standing on an hill near the Apennines, in the principato oltre of the kingdom of Naples, about fifty-five miles eastward of the city of Naples, and fifteen northward of Conza. When Manso invited Tasso to this city, he was no longer its sovereign. Soon after the death of his father, which happened while he was yet a boy, this little principality was disposed of, by public sale, in the Sacro Regio Consiglio, to discharge debts incurred by the deceased Marquis and his brother: but, probably, from an attachment to his natal soil, Manso continued to reside occasionally in this city, where, it seems, he still retained some authority (*Vita del Tasso*, p. 193). Embarrassed in his circumstances, he sold, in 1596, Chianca, improperly called Pianca. So that probably this accomplished nobleman was at length reduced to the single possession of his elegant, but humble abode, near Pozzuoli. With him became extinct the family of Manso, descended from the line of La Scala, an illustrious family of the once flourishing city of Amalfi. He died in 1645, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. Besides his works already printed, he left some valuable MSS. Amongst these, is an Encyclopedia in ten books, of which the four first are now in the library of the King of Naples.

It

It has been said that the village of San Aitore, near Aversa, belonged to the Marquis Manso; but Signor Signorelli informs me, that it was the property of a different family of the same name, of which Thomas Manso, the antiquarian, who died in Naples, in 1650, was a distinguished member.

The authenticity of the life of Tasso ascribed to Manso, has been doubted from the circumstance of the publisher, Evangelista Deuchino, affecting to be author, and only acknowledging to have been indulged with the use of the collections made by the Marquis for a similar undertaking. But I shall beg leave to observe, that the perspicuous arrangement of the materials, the purity and elegance of the diction, the moral and philosophical reflections which frequently occur; and the integrity, in fact, of the whole plan, bear such strong marks of the hand of Manso, that I am induced to think he only borrowed the name of the bookseller, in order that he might covertly do justice to the memory of the deceased, without offending the living. For when this little work appeared, several of the persons necessarily noticed in it as friends or persecutors of Tasso, were still in being; or, if dead, their ashes were not yet cold. Had Manso, therefore, acknowledged himself the author, he must have given offence

to

to many, and perhaps to some of those too, with whom he was living in habits of intimacy. It was then only prudent to screen himself under the name of a man whose interest tempted him to run the risk of incurring the displeasure of a few individuals, and whose humble situation in life might probably serve to protect him. Amongst the internal proofs of the genuineness of this little work, may be adduced the modest manner in which Manso is always mentioned throughout the whole narrative; and that, at the conclusion, he comes forward, we may say in person, to relate the "sentenze e motti," or table-talk of his friend, speaking, at the same time, of his kinsmen, his villas, and his vineyards. It should also be observed, that though Manso lived twenty-four years after the publication of the Vita di Torquato Tasso, he never publicly denied that it was "scritta (as the title-page sets forth) da Gio. Battista Manso."

No VI.

No. VI.

Thoughts on the Origin of Milton's Paradise Lost.

IN addition to the information which enriches the forc-going number of this Appendix, Signor Signorelli favoured me with thoughts on the origin of the Paradise Lost, which, from their ingenuity, and their bearing even slightly upon the subject of this work, I am tempted to lay before the public. "Persuaso come io sono," says he, "de' meriti poetici eminenti del Milton, non m'induco a credere che abbia mai potuto approfittarsi gran fatto della Battaglia celeste tra Michele e Lucifero, del palermitano Antonio Alfani del 1586, dell' Adamo di Giovanni Sorenzo del 1604, dell'Adamo caduto del Salandra del 1647, e dell' Adamo dell' Andreini. Non pertanto ciò che narrasi della rappresentazione di quest' ultimo veduta dal Milton in Milano, è a voi ben noto. E che da quella potesse esser nato nel celebre inglese il pensiero di tessere il suo poema, come non sarebbe cosa inverisimile, così in nulla ciò deroghereb be a i pregi tutti propri di quel raro ingegno, ed all' invenzione del suo poema. Quanto all' Angeleide però poema di tre canti in ottava rima di Erasmo da Valvasone, stampato fin dal 1590. l'anteriorità indubitata di tempo sul Paradiso perduto, e l'analogia nella tessitura e nella dispo-

[illegible] Inglese e le parlate de' capi de' due partiti, e l'idea di far seguire fra essi una vera battaglia, e'l disegno di fare adoperar dagli angeli ribelli il cannone, danno indizi più manifesti di aver l'Angeleide suggerito al Milton alcune idee che leggonsi nel Paradiso perduto." In regard to Milton's obligations to the Angeleide, Signor Signorelli, we find, accords in opinion with Mr. Hayley; nor does he absolutely deny, that the Adamo of Andreini might have given birth to the Paradise Lost. But until the other dramas enumerated above, shall be inspected, (and as yet they have escaped the researches of Signor Signorelli as well as those of Mr. Hayley) it will be impossible to determine whether Milton read them with profit or not. Besides the imitations of the Gerusalemme Liberata of Tasso, and the Adone of Marino, pointed out by Bishop Newton in his edition of the Paradise Lost, Mr. Hayley seems to think, that La Strage degl'Innocenti of the latter may be sometimes traced in the poem of our divine bard. But all the commentators of Milton, pass over in silence his obligations to the Gerusalemme Distrutta of the same author; a production which has little else to recommend it to our notice. Indeed, we must not expect to track Milton only in the snow of the Italian poets. Let us, however, on the present occasion, follow his steps for a few moments, without any intention of "galling his kibe." Not to weary the reader or myself, I shall

shall select only a few of such passages from both poems as appear to me to bear the strongest resemblance to each other.

Pace, pace e pietà scritto à vermiglio
In quei vivi caratteri gli lesse;
E ne gli occhi, non men libri del core,
Lesse a lettere di foco, Amor, Amore.

Stanza 62.

In his face
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure Grace.

Book iii.

Ma quel ciel d'ogni ciel del gran monarca
Palagio inaccessibile, ed ascoso
Trascende i sensi, gl'intelletti eccede,
Sol vi giunge a gran pena occhio di fede.

St. 4.

Again:

Dentro gli abissi d'una luce densa,
Stassi il gran padre in se beato a pieno,
Dalla fontana di tesori immensa,
E dell'immenso incomprensibil seno
Oceano di gloria egli dispensa.

St. 9.

Both those passages are evidently imitated in the following beautiful lines:

Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st

The

The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle heav'n, that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.

B. iii.

Nor is it unlikely, that Marino furnished some of the materials of which the English poet forms the stairs and portal of heaven.

saldi diamantti
Sono i gradi, e le basi, &c.

St. 6,

With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd, thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone.

B. iii.

Scal'd by steps of gold to heav'n gate.

Ibid. l. 541.

When, in Marino's poem, the deity opens the book of fate,

Ove in viva pittura agl'occhi avante
Delle cose il catalogo gli offerse,

St. 27.

we discover several of the scenes which appear in vision to Adam, when he and Michael ascend

a hill
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
The hemisphere of earth in clearest ken
Stretcht out to the amplest reach of prospect lay.

B. xi.

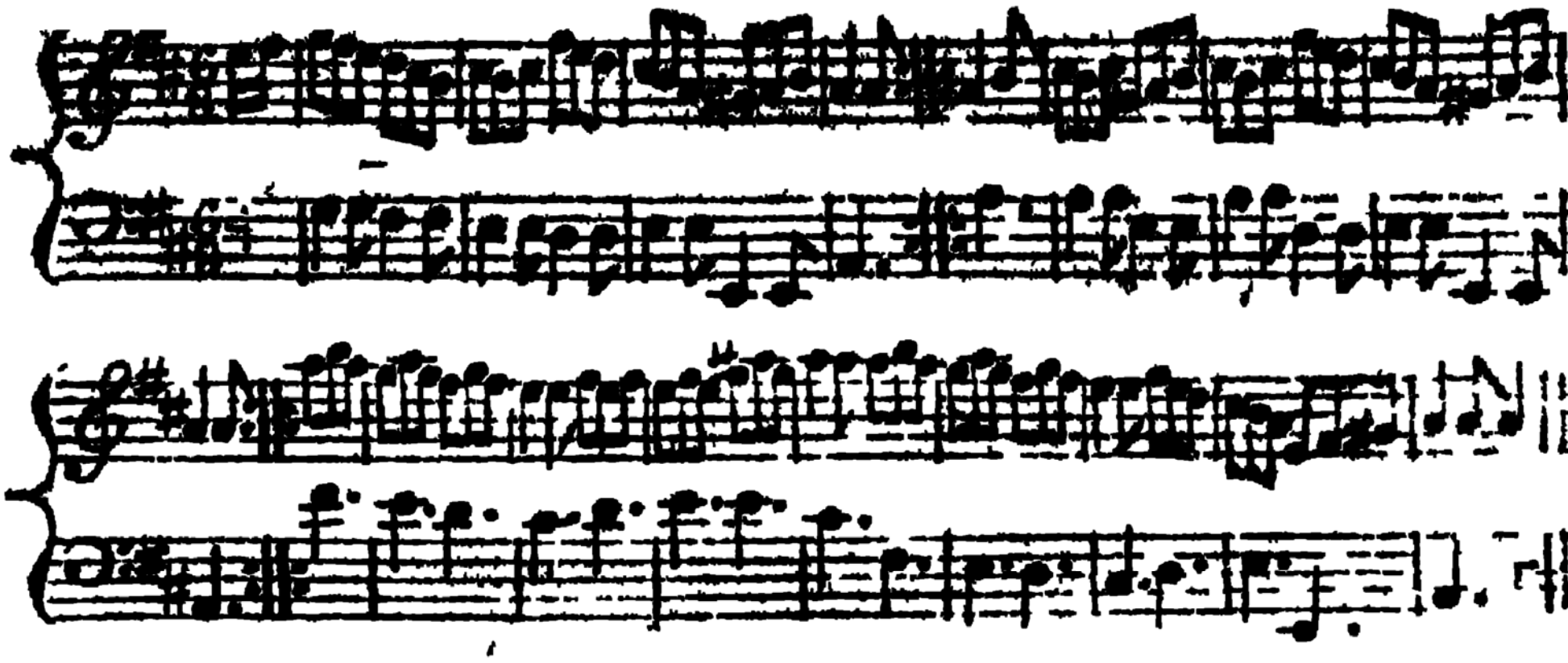
Thus we find that Milton, "like a bee, was studious of gathering flowers wherever he could find them growing."

As no biographer of Marino whom I have consulted, takes the slightest notice of the poem to which our divine bard seems to be so much indebted, I presume it was deemed a production unworthy its author. Indeed, I believe it was never completed, unless I have seen the [illegible] and from that all my extracts are made. This canto is subjoined to two small editions of the Strage degl'Innocenti, in my possession; one printed, without date, at [illegible]; the other at Naples, "a spese di Giacinto Musitano." A portrait of Marino is prefixed to the latter.

Since writing the above, I learned from Barotti's valuable annotations on the Secchia Rapita, that the only canto of the Gerusalemme distrutta which remains, is the seventh; at least it is, he says, the only one which has been printed. It is probable, however, that the poem had been completed, and to the satisfaction of the author too, as he speaks of it in his familiar letters, as a "poema grande," and as a "poema non "meno excellente di quello, che si avesse fatta il Tasso."

No. VII.

La Tarantata, or Tarantelle.



IN the course of my musical researches in Italy, I obtained a copy of the music of this dance, which I deem too curious to be withheld from the public. If the air be coeval with the dance which it still inspires in Calabria, and the kingdom of Naples, its antiquity must be very high indeed; for it is generally believed, that the Tarantata (or, as it is vulgarly called, the Tarantella) was the dance performed, during the Pagan ages, at the orgies of Bacchus. But let us hear an enlightened traveller on this subject. "As I was now in the country of the Tarantula," says Mr. Swinburne, "I was desirous of investigating minutely every particular relative

relative to that insect; but the season was not far enough advanced, and no Tarantati had begun to bite. I prevailed upon a woman, who had formerly been bitten, to act the part, and dance the Tarantata before me. A great many musicians were summoned, and she performed the dance, as all present assured me, to perfection. At first she lolled stupidly on a chair, while the instruments were playing some dull musick. They touched, at length, the chord supposed to vibrate to her heart (*the air given above*) and up she sprang with a most hideous yell, staggered about the room like a drunken person, holding a handkerchief in both hands, raising them alternately, and moving in very true time. As the music grew brisker, her motions quickened, and she skipped about with great vigour and variety of steps, every now and then shrieking very loud. The scene was far from pleasant; and, at my desire, an end was put to it before the woman was tired. Wherever the Tarantati are to dance, a place is prepared for them, hung round with bunches of grapes and ribbons. The patients are dressed in white, with red, green, or yellow ribbons, for those are their favourite colours; on their shoulders they cast a white scarf, let their hair fall loose about their ears, and throw their heads as far back as they can bear it. They are exact copies of the ancient priestesses of Bacchus. The orgies of that god, whose worship, under various symbols, was more widely spread over the globe than that of any other divinity, were, no doubt, performed with energy and enthusiasm,

enthusiasm, by the lively inhabitants of this warm climate. The introduction of Christianity abolished all public exhibitions of these heathenish rites, and the women durst no longer act a frantic part in the character of Bacchantes. Unwilling to give up so darling an amusement, they devised other pretences; and possession by evil spirits may have furnished them with one. Accident may also have led them to a discovery of the Tarantula; and, upon the strength of its poison, the Puglian dames still enjoy their old dance, though time has effaced the memory of its ancient name and institution; and this I take to be the origin of so strange a practice." *Travels in the Two Sicilies, vol.* ii. *sect.* 52. The ingenious conjecture of Mr. Swinburne, receives support from oral tradition. Under the influence of this notion, a company of Bacchantes were introduced, a few years ago, in a masquerade in Aquila, (a small city in Abruzzo) who, in the course of the evening, performed a dance in character, graced with all the lascivious gestures of the Tarantata.

And about ten years since, it was suggested to the manager of the theatre of san Carlo in Naples, to introduce this dance upon the stage, where, as a danza nazionale, it drew, for several nights, large audiences. To give the performance the air and interest of a ballet, the scenery represented santa Lucia, the fish-market of Naples; and while dancers of both sexes, dressed in character, offered fish to sale, the Tarantella was performed in the front of the stage. During the neces-

sary

sary intervals of rest, the dancers, in the assumed character of pescivendoli, or fish-mongers, advanced in groups, and danced a moresca to the sound of castanets. On this occasion the prima ballerina condescended to take lessons from certain fish-women who were celebrated for their performance of this dance.

In this singular ballet each ballerino wore a berrettino da marinaro, or sailor's cap; and the female dancers, who personated pescivendole, had their hair confined in nets; a fashion which prevailed amongst the ancient Romans, and still obtains in several parts of Italy, particularly in the kingdom of Naples. This fashion is alluded to by Virgil and Juvenal, and described by Tasso in the first chorus of the Aminta:

Tu raccogliesti in rete
Le chiome all' aura sparte.

No. VIII.

Dedication prefixed to the Adama of Andreini, published at Milan, 1613.

Alla Maestà Christianissima di Maria De' Medici, Reina di Francia.

IO non poteva in questo mondo esser più favorito dalla mia sorte REINA Christianissima, che nel tener' ordine di passarmene in Francia con Florinda mia, e con questi compagni nostri à servire à V. Maestà col virtuoso passatempo delle comedie: perche, oltre il gusto d'ubbidire in tanta occasione all' Altezza serenissima del Sig. Duca di Mantova nostro padrone; io, che nato sono in Firenze sotto il felicissimo imperio de' MEDICI serenissimi; vedrò nella Francia in persona della Maestà vostra ampliata la patria mia, ed il chiarissimo sole, (dico V. M. medesima, splendor del suo sangue) spander per tutto i raggi della sua gloria nell' ampiezza di sì gran regno. Vedrò, contento quei tesori mirabili, che la liberal mano di Dio altamente locò nell' Erario pretioso di V. M. quando in lei si vidde tosto augustamente risplendere nella chiarezza del sangue la bellezza dell' animo con quella del corpo, che sono quelle trè doti, anzi quelle trè forti chiare ed illustri, in cui si specchiò, ed hebbe il suo magnanimo

Arrigo di gloriosa memoria, origine di quelle benefiche, e divine virtù, che con l'esaltatione della Maestà Vostra hanno portato alle stelle il suo nome, e la felicità nella Francia con la cara pace, che và godendo sotto il prudente, e fortunato governo di lei. Ma per non abbagliarmi in un sì luminoso splendore, porto meco un riparo celeste, col qual mi presento humilmente innanzi à V. M. ed è la presente opera intitolata l'Adamo, poetica imitatione da me composta fra l'hore più libere da gli esercitij soliti della comedia; parendomi, che se non altro, almen la materia, che non è grande, e meschina hà proportione con la grandezza, e con la pietà della Maestà Vostra, debba in certo modo servirmi di scudo fra tale innanzi il suo christianissimo lume, per ammirarlo senza offesa dell' occhio, come innanzi la spera del sole altri si scherme per avventura, opponendo qualche ingegnoso christallo. Così mentra V. M. si degnerà, come riverentemente la supplico, trattenersi nel mio libro contemplando le meraviglie di Dio, ed i suoi parti divini, potrà io fermarmi contemplando quelle della Maestà Vostra, ed il suo mirabil parto del christianissimo rè figlio, vivo specchio, ed essempio delle paterne, e materne sembianze, e di quelle soprahumane virtù, onde hà da crescere in colmo la gloria di tutto il regno, e da prosperer per sempre la vita del christianesmo. Mi hà spinto particolarmente à dedicarlo à V. M. oltre il rispetto dell' esser nato suddito, come già dissi, della sua sereniss. casa, che m' ubbligava à qualche tributo di vassallagio; l'esser' anche figlio

d'Isabella

d'ISABELLA Andreini, gradita già, per mio credere, dal benigno animo di V. M. che può più mi sfortzava à riconoscere il retaggio materno, procurando in qualche maniera la buona gratia della M. V. La supplico perciò con ogni humiltà, che le piaccia di scusar questo ardimento d'haver voluto eternar l'opera mia con l'eternità del suo nome, e di gradire in essa la volontà mia di prestare in tutti i tempi quegli honori, che posso alla M. V. la cui persona christianissima, con quella dell' invitissimo rè figlio, Iddio guardi, e feliciti, che col fine riverentemente m' inchino à suoi piedi.

Di Milano il dì 18 Giugno 1618. Di V. M. christianissima

Servo humilissimo,

GIO. BATTISTA ANDREINI.

No. IX.

Passage from l'Adamo di Gio. Battista Andreini, printed at Perugia, 1641.

Atto II. Sc. 4.

SE meco venite Eva t'alletta,
Cosa tal vo mostrarti,
Che inconsumabilmente
Sentirai per dolcezza, e per diletto,
Struggerti il cor nel petto.
Mica sposa gentile
Trà quell'ombre odorate,
Di pallidi cipressi,
Ov' alzeppan gli augei la voce, e'l volo,
Là dove appunto quelle due sì bianche
Colombe van con risolute penne;
Quivi, ò bella, vedrai
(Pompa di monte alpestro)
Dà un humida vorago
Di pomici ammollata,
Sboccar libero, e desto,
Diluvioso humore,
Ch' assorda risonante,

Ch'

Ch' abbaglia spumeggiante ;
Hor mentre immoto al guardo
D'acque lo sbocco empiè.
L'onda riflettitrice,
Che trà macigni imperiosa sbalza
Aventando à le stelle il fresco humore ;
Par, che vada à temprar dei sol l'ardore.
Dal margo poi de la sonevol onda
Anzi da l'antro dove
Scaturiggine eterna han tutte l'acque.
Disperdendosi l'acque,
Corrono ingentilite,
Del prato à l'herbe, à i fiori,
Stanche à l'errar di montuosi horrori.
Quinci avvien, che tù veggia
(Maraviglia del guardo)
Sorger trà i molli fiori
Di cristal fuggitivo
Humor limpido, algente,
Che sì rapido fugge,
E fuggevole alletta ;
Ch' è forza dir ; fermati rivo aspetta.
Quindi vago in seguirlo
Rapido il segui, c'n tanto,
Scherzator lusinghiero,
Frà mille occulte vie
Ginestrevoli, herbose,
Anzi cognite à lui,

So

Se ignote à gli occhi altrui
Con piè liquido, e ebro,
Appiattandosi fuggesi..
Poi sentendo le querule
Voci perche di subito
Si nascose fuggevole,
Alza la chioma acquatica,
E'n riso gorgogliando
In sua favella humida
Dolce par così dicesi.
Seguì il passo fuggevole,
Tù di me godi, io teco sarò ameno,
Così con dolce vagabondo inganno
E ti move, e ti guida,
Sino à l'estrema riva
Di praticel fiorito; ed egli allhora
Con veloce dimora
Dice rimanti, addio; colli ti lascio;
Poi si dirupa al basso,
Nè seguirlo potendo il più veglioso,
Forz' è che l'occhio il segua, e là tù vedi;
Che d' acque un cupo gorgo in alvo angusto
Accoglia in ampia, e fruttuosa valle
D'allor cinta, e d'ulivo,
Verdissimo tesor d'amene rive;
Il qual lucido humor' à'rai del sole
Sembra puro cristallo,
Ad ingemmar il sen di herboso valle.

Quind'ha, che'n Hampis fundo
Nel cristallin de Londe;
Tralocer miri ricca arena d'oro.
El guttievole argento
Di cento pesci, e cento;
Qui con note canore
Candidi cigni à la bell'onde intorno
Fanno dolce soggiorno,
E sembran gorgheggiando à l'aura dire;
Entro quest'acque belle
Avvampate d'amor nuotan le stelle.

No. X.

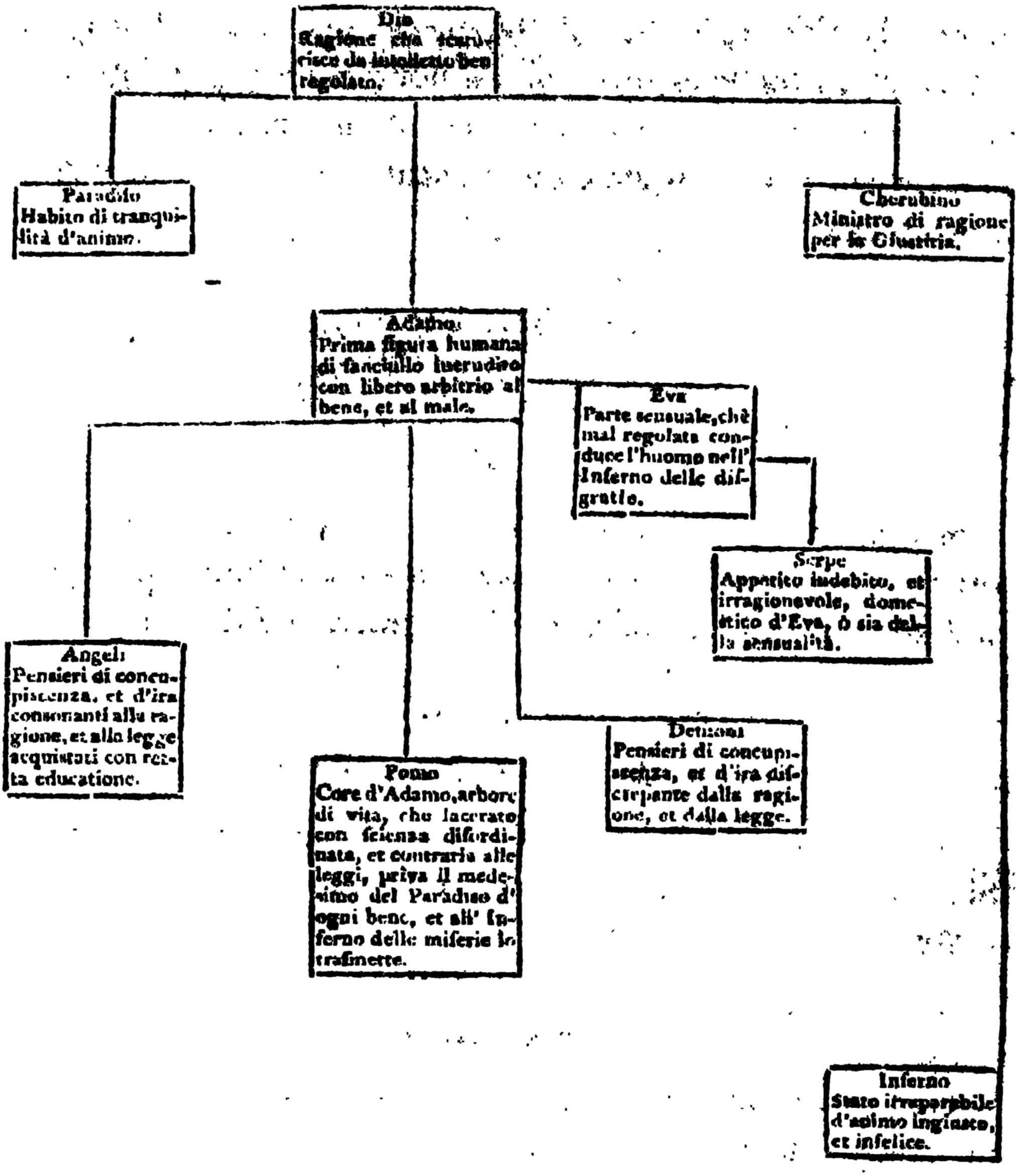
An Analysis of the Drama, entitled, La Sacra Tragica d' Adamo ed Eva; da Troilo Lancetta, Benacense. Venetia, 1644.

ADWERTISEMENT.

I am induced by the extreme rarity of this little drama, and its happy effect on the mind of Milton, to depart from my original purpose, (see Sect. II.) and to present the reader with an illustrated analysis of the whole piece. As Mr. Hayley's analysis is clear and satisfactory, I shall take the liberty to borrow it, and only blend occasionally with his view of this curious production, such specimens as may serve to give an idea of the author's manner and style.

The only passage worth transcription in the address to the reader, has been already given. But of the moral exposition, a fac simile is exhibited on the opposite page. The dedication to the Duchess of Mantua abounds with incense which has long since lost its odour. So that it only remains to observe, that the work was printed at Venice, in 1644, appresso li Guerigli. The frontispiece consists of the united arms of the houses of Mantua and Gonzaga. And a rude wooden engraving of the deity, standing upon a large globe, and holding a small one in his left hand, adorns the title-page.

MORALE ESPOSATIONE.



THE PROLOGUE

is merely the argument of the piece, delivered, it may be supposed, in the person of the author, and concluding with an observation on the importance of the subject, and this pious wish, " che questa scena voi tutti, e me insieme riduca a penitenza."

ACT THE FIRST.

Scene I.

God

Commemorates his creation of the heavens, the earth, and the water—determines to make man—gives him vital spirit, and admonishes him to revere his maker, and live innocent.

Scene II.

Raphael, Michael, Gabriel, and Angels.

Raphael praises the works of God—the other angels follow his example, particularly in regard to man.

Scene III.

God and Adam.

God gives Paradise to Adam to hold as a fief—forbids him to touch the apple.—Adam promises obedience. At the

opening of this scene, God asks Adam his opinion of the new world which he has created—Adam replies.

Dia. Oh' là Adamo dimmi pure, come ti piace l'ornamento di questo mondo nuovo? che cosa vai tu contemplando intorno a questa tanta machina, ed all'altezza delle stelle collocate, ed resperse in cielo; trovi forsi cosa fatta, che non t'aggrada, ò che ti paia di poco prezzo?

Adamo. Signore a me pare, che tutto ciò che voi havete fatto, sia di tutta esquisitezza, ed io in me stesso ne posso esser buon testimonio, perchè poco fà vi compiaceste di crearmi senza che lo spirito, che m'havete infuso, havesse cognitione, ò prescienza alcuna, ch'io fossi per acquistare vita cosi soave in questo mondo, e perciò conosco ch'il presente mio stato è tanto più prestante, e singolare, quanto ch'hora intendo, e conosco voi vero Dio, e Creatore, ed a questa vocatione chiamato, e creato per quest' oggetto, viverò solo a cenno della vostra santa volontà, imperciochc; ò signore, voi m'havete fatto huomo di pura terra.

Scene IV.

Adam

Acknowledges the beneficence of God ,and retires to repose in the shade.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

God and Adam.

God resolves to form a companion for Adam, and does s while Adam is sleeping—he then awakes Adam, and present ing to him his new associate, blesses them both; then leave them, recommending obedience to his commands.

SCENE II.

Adam and Eve.

Adam receives Eve as his wife—praises her, and entreat her to join with him in revering and obeying God—she pro mises submission to his will, and intreats his instruction—he tells her the prohibition, and enlarges on the beauties of Pa radise in the following words:

Passegiaremo alquanto per li confini di questo bel giardino vedi per cortesia quanto d'ogn' intorno è colmo di delitie, se miraste solo la varietà de i colori sparsi sopra tanti fiori, che cosa di gratia puo apparire più bella da vedersi?

Ridono i prati per il bel verde dell' herbi; molti delli al lori superbi s'ergono all' alto con le frondi, e quelli di loro, a quali cadono le foglie, e i rami, d'aria puro e soave, ci ren dono grata e placid 'ombra.

Acque

Acque dolci scendono dal strepitoso fonte nel seno d'un guado di color d'argento, irrigando con facile descenso i prati tutti di grato mormorio, ed inondano pur anco i campi con pienissimi ruscelli, à grado tale, che aridi ne si fanno, ne per soverchia inondatione offendono.

Senti colà nella selva la melodia de lussignoli, qua intorno la fragranza de frutti, che spira giorno, e notte da questi alberi, trapassando con soave odore i nostri sensi.

On his speaking of flocks, she desires to see them, and he departs to shew her the various animals.

Scene III.

Lucifer, Belial, Satan.

Lucifer laments his expulsion from heaven, and meditates revenge against man—the other demons relate the cause of their expulsion, and stimulate Lucifer to the revenge he meditates—he resolves to employ the serpent, because è molto à proposito per quest' impresa, bello, buono, pieno di benedi-tioni, ed amabile più d'ogn' altra bestia che viva sopra la terra, e quel ch' importa, l'huomo gode che le sia domestica.

Scene IV.

The Serpent, Eve, Lucifer.

The serpent questions Eve—derides her fear and her obedience—tempts her to taste the apple—she expresses her eagerness

eagerness to do so—the serpent exults in the prospect of her perdition—Lucifer (who seems to remain as a separate person from the serpent) expresses also his exultation, and steps aside to listen to a dialogue between Adam and Eve.

SCENE V.

Eve, Adam.

Eve declares her resolution to taste the apple, and presents it to her husband—she tastes it, and expresses unusual hope and animation—she says the serpent has not deceived her—she feels no sign of death, and presents the fruit to her husband—he reproves her—she persists in pressing him to eat—he complies—declares the fruit sweet, but begins to tremble at his own nakedness—he repents, and expresses his remorse and terror—Eve proposes to form a covering of leaves—they retire to hide themselves in foliage.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Lucifer, Belial, Satan.

Lucifer exults in his success, and the other demons applaud him—he proposes celebrating the serpent's victory over the inhabitants of Paradise.

Lucifero. Staremo dunque allegri, e ridenti, poiche habbiamo ottenuto la vittoria, e formaremo il trionfo con la squadra de nostri seguaci, decorata con armi, cantando sempre d'haver vinto l'humana stirpe; se questa non è grande, e vera allegrezza, quale di meglio potremo sperar mai in alcun tempo?

Scene II.

Raphael, Michael, Gabriel.

These good spirits lament the fall, and retire with awe on the appearance of God.

Scene III.

God, Eve, Adam.

God calls on Adam—he appears, and laments his nakedness—God interrogates him concerning the tree—he confesses his offence, and accuses Eve—she blames the serpent—God pronounces his malediction, and sends them from his presence.

Scene IV.

Raphael, Eve, and Adam.

Raphael bids them depart from Paradise—Adam laments his destiny—Raphael persists in driving them rather harshly from the garden—Adam begs that his innocent children may not suffer for the fault of their mother—Raphael replies, that not

not only his children, but all his race, must suffer, and con-
tinues to drive them from the garden—Adam obeys—Eve
laments, but soon comforts Adam—he at length departs,
animating himself with the idea, that to an intrepid heart
every region is a home.

Scene V.

A Cherub,

Moralizing on the creation and fall of Adam, concludes the drama and monologue thus:

Con questa sola speranza si nodriscono, languenti intanto li tremano le membra, chiuso è l'horto, e di modo guardato che non vi potranno mai più mettervi li piedi, poiche è fatto già loco proprio delli angeli beati, escluso l'huomo per propria colpa:

Felice lui se vi si fosse trattenuto senza peccato, di quanto ti sei privato da te stesso oh pessima creatura:

Siatemi veracj testimonij di questo fatto ò ciclo, ò alberi, ò monti, ò mare, ò fiumi, ò fere: forsennato Adamo, che per sola intemperanza hà perduto quel bene, ch' in eterno à pena si ritrova;

Ma questo non è di nostra attinenza, che il gioco si fà contro di lui, e se ne pentirà, mà troppo tardi, e la voce publica de posteri maledirà sempre cosi gran fallo: questo è giorno da notarsi con penello fosco, ò con inchiostro, per esso memorando nella perditione, dell'humana salute.

No. XI.

Avvertimenti agli Attori, prefissi all' Eduigi del Conte Alessandro Pepoli.

I. Il vestiario nero all' antica è quello, che più conviene in questa tragedia, sì per la serietà del soggetto, come per la maestà dello spettacolo. I pontefici però per non essere molto confusi coi nostri sacerdoti devono servirsi d'altri colori, e in tal guisa, che il vestimento loro s'avvicini, non però totalmente, a quello dei sacerdoti greci antichi. Non mi servirei della mitra, essendo troppo caricata, ma piuttosto d'un berrettone quadro di qualchè colore, fuorchè del nero.

II. Odo essendo più giovine si può contrassegnare colla maggiore oscurità della barba.

III. Nell' atto secondo la scena del sotteraneo deve essere profonda, e deve esser notte, non per altro, se non perchè in tale specie di luoghi è sempre buio. Parranno ridicole queste notizie; ma per i comici sono necessarie.

IV. Nella scena terza dell'atto secondo quando viene Elgiva, e s'inginocchia, Eduigi non deve mai sospendere il discorso tra la scena seconda che finisce, e la terza che comincia; e soltanto deve marcare il passaggio colla vibrazione del "povera Elgiva!"

V. Nella scena quarta dell'atto seconda non v'è per ambidue tenerezza che basti.

VI. Nella scena prima dell' atto terzo tutte le piccole interrogazioni de' pari, e de' pontefici devono succedersi vibrate; e Dunstano, ed Odo, ma il primo spezialmente, deve portar su la fronte un'aria incessante di mistero, ed Odo nella fine di entusiasmo.

VII. Nelle prime scene dell'atto quarto Elgiva deve dimostrar sempre il più terribile presentimento.

VIII. La scena quarta dell'atto suddetto è la più importante della tragedia, e tutto il di lei colpo dipende dalla veloce esecuzione. Ecco in qual modo in un teatro di prova io l'ho disegnata:

Supponendo le stanze d'Eduigi alla destra del palco, e la porta, ove entrano i pontefici alla sinistra, Elgiva nel corso della scena sarà alla destra, ora sul sofà assistita da Elfrida alla sinistra, ma un poco indietro, perchè tra Elgiva ed i pontefici resti libera la scena, ora in piedi con Elfrida, che viene a rimanere alla sinistra assolutamente fra i pontefici e la regina. Tutte le volte che Dunstano ed Odo tenteranno di rapir la regina, passeranno dinanzi ad Elfrida senza difficoltà. Nel fine poi, quando si sente la voce d'Eduigi tra le scene a mano destra, e che i pontefici traggono a forza Elgiva con essi, Dunstano afferrerà la regina per la destra, che resterà sempre rivolta alla parte donde viene lo sposo, e Odo passerà per di dietro della regina all' altra mano senz' afferrarla, ma come

impedendola di fuggire. Quando Dunstano dirà " la tua speranza è vana," deve essere vicino ad entrare nella scena sinistra, ma Elgiva tutta fuori sul palco. Nel mentre che ciò segue, Elfrida correrà dietro ai pontefici, e alla regina, velocissima essendo a dire " temerarj, che osate?" Poscia rispinta quand' ella vede ciò che appena potrebbe credere, batterà palma con palma, guardando il cielo, e correrà in giù, ma sempre dalla sinistra, appoggiandosi al proscenio, se però questo è ad un giusto livello.

IX. Nella scena ultima dell'atto quinto Odo sarà velocissimo ad arrestare Etelvaldo. Quando poi Eduigi va contro ad Odo, quest' ultimo deve ritirarsi dietro ai soldati in modo, che nell'ultimo momento, ch'egli si è ritirato, giunga Eduigi rispinto, e tosto seguirà Odo dicendo:

Il suo furore
D'assalir oserebbe il cielo stesso.

Nel tempo de'quali versi Eduigi arriverà (nel fine appunto) ad avere corso alla destra sul fine del palco per poi dir subito:

Voi lo sperate invan. &c. &c.

X. Quegli stessi soldati, che dovevano rapire il ferro ad Eduigi, verrano a poco a poco dietro a lui ne'tre versi, che dice prima d'uccidersi, affinchè lo sostengano quando cade trafitto. Devono però questi soldati circuirlo in sembianza di poter poi riuscire a disarmarlo.

N. B

N. B. In questa tragedia, dove l'attore del re diventa quello della nazione, mi parve necessaria la direzione che corre espressa, i quali però rimangono totalmente dimenticati perchè gli rimasse superflui, come ciò accederà facilmente nel moderno costume

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THINKING the foregoing instructions worthy the imitation of every dramatic poet, who has a due regard to his fame, I have been induced to give them a place in this Appendix. Mis-conception of character has often occasioned the failure of many a drama of intrinsic merit, on the public stage: several pieces too have suffered from inattention to costume. Count Pepoli's example should therefore be followed: every dramatic writer should, like him, accompany his piece with such written directions as he would give if he were present at the rehearsal. Nor should music be forgotten: such airs only should be performed between the acts, as would be likely to promote the delusion by deepening the last impression; and, during the performance, an occasional symphony should be introduced to aid the intended effect of the poet. Shakspeare and Andreini, both dramatic poets and players by profession, deemed written instructions to the actors, either general or particular, indispensably necessary; and both have recommended the occasional use of appropriate music.

No. XII.

Further thoughts on ADDISON'S *obligations to the Catone Uticense; with some account of that drama.*

WHEN I wrote my observations on the Cato of Addison, I had not seen the Venetian opera which he describes; but I am now, through the friendship of Doctor Burney, (the elegant and profound historian of music,) in possession of a copy of that little drama, which, on a careful inspection, has confirmed me in the opinion that I have hazarded in regard to the probable origin of the love intrigue in the English tragedy. The view which Addison has exhibited of the fable of this opera, is clear and correct; and, from the scrupulous exactness of his quotations, it would seem, that he wrote with the libretto lying before him. "Cæsar's first words, says he, "bid his soldiers fly, for the enemies are upon them. *Si leva Cesare e dice à solduti: A la fugga; a' lo scampo.*" The passage stands thus in the libretto.

Atto i. *Scena* 2.

Giuliano ansiante và da Cesare.

Svegliati mio signor: Cesare: viene
Vasto diluvio d' armi

A te dal campidoglio: vedi; abbaglia
fiero de i brandi, e incenerisce il lampo.

Si leva Cesare, e dice à soldati.

Cef. A la fugga.

Si levano i soldati.

Giu'. A la fugga. *Cef.* *Sab.* *Giu'.* } A' lo scampo.

Giuliano, who takes so active a part in this scene, is an officer in the service of Cæsar, and a character answering to, and, perhaps, the prototype of, the Sempronius of Addison. He is the secret admirer of Sabina, in whose affections he is rivalled by Florus; and, with the treachery which marks the character of Sempronius, he devises means for the destruction of his rival.

As I do not mean to insinuate that Addison borrowed more than the love intrigue from the Venetian opera, he has himself, by reporting the principal incidents of the table, related enough for my purpose. But it may gratify the reader to compare the inimitable soliloquy of Cato in the English tragedy, with the following soliloquy in the Italian opera.

After a smart altercation between Scipio and Cato in the library of the latter, Cato seats himself at a table, takes up a Plato, and reads. Scipio retires.

Atto

Atto iii. *Scena* 12.

CATONE. *Solo.*

Oggi vedrà Catone
Cesare in Roma? e in braccio
Lo vedrà di Flaminia? e assente; il veggo;
Al trionfo d'un barbaro rubello
L' alto Roman consiglio?
Sorge: sorge
si leva.
Torbida nera ecclisse
Tutta à coprir di tenebre la terra.
Veggo in Roma la terra aprir voragini
Sepeliscono i consoli, e' l senato.
Chi? dove? chi ricovera Catone?
Chiudi ò cimeria notte
Quest' occhi miei. Platone
siede, e rilegge.
Tù, ch' immortal fai l' alma,
Anche l'eroe frà vivi eterno vive.
E fà d'eroe grand' opra,
Poiche inutile al danno
Parla sù i rostri, e in sù le carte scrive,
Quel cittadin, che fido
De la patria al morir non sopravive.
Servi . . . . Mà, à che ricerco
Quì, chi m'uccida? io di me stesso à un tempo
Sarò nel sagrificio
si leva, e prende un ferro.

E sacerdote, e vittima; [redacted]
Catone sol dia di Catoh [redacted]
Tù fosse sucumani;
Tù destra uccidimi,
Passami 'l cor.
Mio luce, chiudemi
Mortale orror.

Cato then strikes himself with the dagger which he holds in his hand, and the scene which Addison describes, ensues.

In the following passage in sc. 14. of this same act, we discover, in a seminal state, the parting scene between Cato and his children in the English tragedy.

Catone tolta la veste agli omeri, si levi in piedi, e spiega le braccia, dice.

Cat. Impeto cittadino,
Augusto genio, madre di Catone,
Patria, Roma, ini regno il volgr vostro.
Cedo la piaga, e 'l cor chi in essa mostro.
Luc. Tuo core è il cor di Roma.
Cat. Vengano i figli rei.
Vanno Flaminia, e Floro à Catone. In fretta dice.
Ces. Flaminia. *Sab.* Floro.
à 2. Non errò.
Qui si prostrano à piè di Catone Flaminia, e Floro.
Flo. Padre. *Fla.* Genitor. *à 2.* Perdono.
Cat. A la patria vi dono. *Piangendo.*
Si alzano i due figliuoli, e vanno per baciargli la destra.

La

Luc. (Bene degno d' altari.)

Catone stesa la mano à figli, dice.

Cat. E à ben amarla
Questo sangue v' insegni, e questa piaga.
Scipione, a Giuliano
Che mi sueló la reità de' figli.

Cef. }
S' alzi 'l sepolcro. *Fla.* } (Trad.tor) *Cat.* Iù porgi
Flo. }

Cesare a me di genero la destra.

Cef. Di genero, e d' amico.

Cat. T' abbraccio.

Cade languido in braccio di Cesare.

This little drama is thus entitled: *Catone Uticense: Drama per Musica, da recitarsi nel teatro Grimani in S. Gio. Grisostomo, di Matteo Noris, l' anno* MDCCI. *Dedicato all' illustriss. et excellentiss. Sig. Don Gaetano Cesarini, principe di Genzano. In Venetia, 1701. per li Niccolini.* In an advertisement to the reader, the author acknowledges his departure from history: "Eccoti la historia," says he, "il di più si finge, ma ti rappresenta la ferità di Catone, non la morte, perche habbiano luogo gli sponsali di Cesare con Flaminia, e di Floro con Sabina." But this is not the only instance in which the author deviates from history: he removes the scene of his fable from

[redacted] No. XIV.

from Utica to Rome, and formerly from this city and its vicinity.

When I only knew the Catone Uticense from the report of Addison, I said that its plot or fable bore a strong resemblance to that of the Catone of Metastasio. I have since read the drama, and my opinion remains unshaken.

HOUSE OF MONTANO

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES.

FRONTISPIECE. PORTRAIT and Arms of G. G. Trissino, from his life, by Pier Filippo Casielli, *Ven.* 1753. 4to.

TITLE-PAGE. Seal of the Arcadian Academy of Rome.

PAGE 1..... Portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici, detto il Magnifico, from *Lettere e Ricordi*, — *Carni Libertine, e Canti Carnescialeschi*, printed, in two volumes 8vo. in Cosmopoli (Pisa) 1750.

PAGE 8..... View of the Villa Madama, near Rome, (See *Vem.* p. 66.) from a print by Byrne, the original painting by Richard Wilson.

PAGE 9..... Portrait of Gio. Battista Giraldi Cinthio, from a collection of his dramatic works published in Venice, 1583, by his son, Celso.

PAGE 134.... Music of a Chorus in the Oratorio *dell' Anime e del Corpo*, from the 4th volume of Dr. Burney's *History of Music*.

PAGE 138.... The interior of a theatre, with an actor delivering the prologue,—spectators in the pit,—taken from a print on wood in the *Antigone* of G. P. Trapolini, printed at Padua, 1581. This print may be either supposed to exhibit a view of the interior of a particular theatre, or of the Italian theatre in general in the sixteenth century.

PAGE 139.... Portrait of Gio. Battista Andreini, author of the *Adamo*, &c. from a copy of his *Florindo*, printed at Milan, 1606, in the collection of the Earl of Charlemont.

PAGE 206.... A Scene in Paradise from the *Adamo* of G. B. Andreini, printed at Milan, 1613. 4to. It is observed by the editor of the *Bibliotheca Pinelliana*, that "un' esemplare di quest' edizione, ch'è la prima, ed è ornata di sette nove tavole intagliate in rame, nella vendita della Libreria del Duca della Vallière, fu venduto per lire cento trenta due Tornesi."

PAGE 207.... Portrait of Vittorio Alfieri, from a print engraved by Morgan.

PAGE 232. (to face) Portrait of the Marquis Scipione Maffei, from an engraving communicated by Prince Carlo de Gonzaga.

PAGE 332.... Section of the Olympic Theatre of Vicenza.

PAGE 337.... Portrait of P. Aretino, from his comedy of the *Cortigiana*, printed 1537, without name of place.

PAGE [illegible] of the Appendix. The house of Cr. G. Trissino at Cricoli, near Vicenza.